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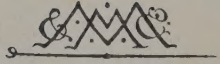
THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI



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THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

CHRISTINA GEORGINA ROSSETTI

WITH MEMOIR AND NOTES &c

BY

WILLIAM MICHAEL ROSSETTI

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PREFACE

CHRISTINA ROSSETTI'S first published poetic volume, which had been preceded by some poems issued in a more scattered shape, was produced in 1862; she died in 1894. It seems now to be time that her Poetical Works should be brought out in a duly co-ordinated form, practically (though not in the most absolute possible sense) complete.

Her poetic volumes appeared as follows:—

1. *Verses*, privately printed, 1847. This volume has been reissued to the public at a recent date, but without any authority obtained, nor I suppose legally needed, from the representatives of the writer.

2. *Goblin Market and other Poems*, 1862 (Macmillan).

3. *The Prince's Progress and other Poems*, 1866 (Macmillan).

4. *Sing-Song*, 1872 (Routledge, now Macmillan).

5. *A Pageant and other Poems*, 1881 (Macmillan). The volumes 2, 3, and 5, have been reissued in a collected form, introducing a moderate number of additional poems.

6. *Verses*, 1893 (Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge). These poems are reprinted in the volume here named from three earlier volumes of combined prose and verse.

7. *New Poems*, 1896 (Macmillan). Collected and edited by myself after Christina's death.

From this list it will be seen that the Firm of Macmillan & Co., Limited, has now and heretofore been in a position to deal with all Christina Rossetti's poems, except only the *Verses*, 1893, No. 6 on the list. Those *Verses* include many of the finest devotional poems that she ever wrote; and to bring out, without including these, an edition of her poems professedly or proximately complete, would have been a fallacious attempt. By an arrangement made with the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, we are enabled to include the *Verses* in the present edition.

The division of my sister's writings in this edition runs thus: The Longer Poems, Juvenilia, Devotional Poems, General Poems, Poems for Children and Minor Verse, and Italian Poems. Each of these sections is arranged in order of date, so far as the conditions (as to which some details are given in my Notes) reasonably allow. I think that readers already interested in Christina Rossetti's poetry will find some pleasure in tracing the sequence of dates. They will learn that some of her best poems were written at a very early period of her youth. Her own arrangement of her poems in the latest collected edition (which, as already indicated, includes only the volumes that I have numbered 2, 3, and 5, and not the other four volumes) may also be regarded as a point of some interest; I give that Table of Contents in an Appendix (A). That her arrangement in all instances was not merely haphazard may be taken for granted—she consulted her brother Dante Gabriel a good deal, with regard at any rate to No. 3; at the same time, I do not perceive that any very definite plan has been followed in the latest collected edition. One clear distinction is made—that of separating the poems which first appeared in vol. 5 from those which are proper to vols. 2 and 3; the contents of 2 and 3 are fused together without any regard to dates of composition or of first publication, and perhaps even with some inclination to keep this point in a haze.

As to the few Italian poems, I have had before now occasion to remark that they appear to me to be in essentials as good as those in English, although I could readily suppose that in some points of diction, etc. they are not up to the standard of verse written by a native Italian. Later on I was somewhat surprised to find, in an Italian literary paper named *Il Marzocco*, a criticism expressed in the following very adverse terms: 'She wrote also some Italian verses; but, if I am to judge of them from the specimens I know, they not only do not add anything to her fame as a poet, but rather detract from it, so formless and inept do they seem to me. It might almost be thought that the writer of those verses did not, as we know she did, speak from early childhood her paternal language.' This criticism is signed 'Th. Neal,' an English-seeming name which is used (as I have been informed) by an Italian writer. I quote the observation for whatever it may be worth, and for candour's sake, but can hardly help thinking that it must be harsher than the circumstances warrant. Recently I have had occasion to converse with a literary Italian, well versed in English: he considers that Christina's Italian

verses are not undeserving of commendation, and assimilate to native work more nearly than those of Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

With regard to the volume above-mentioned entitled *New Poems*, which I edited in 1896 after my sister's death, it has been alleged by some critics that I raked together all that I could find, however indifferent in several instances, and presented all to the public, who would gladly have dispensed with many. As a statement of fact, I know this to be incorrect; and, as a matter of opinion, I consider it mistaken. So far from raking together all that I could find, I left unused a considerable number of compositions that were at my disposal; and in the present edition I still leave these unused. I add in an Appendix (B) a list of them; this is perhaps not of much concern to any one, but it serves to confirm my assertion, and may be regarded with favour by some future editor, who might really be minded to carry to its utmost limit the 'raking-together' process. And I will not pretend to deny that, in the case of a writer who has attained a certain standard (it must be a high one) of fame and popularity, I consider that that process has a good deal to say for itself.

The contents of the volume named *New Poems* are of course reproduced, in their due order of date, etc., in the present edition. In prefacing that volume I made the remark: 'I conceive *some* of the compositions herein contained to be up to the level of Christina Rossetti's best work,[1] and the great majority of them to be well up to her average.' This is an opinion which I still entertain, although aware that several critics of the *New Poems* formed and expressed a very different judgment. They seemed to find little to commend in the volume, and much to object to, both in the poems themselves and in my action as their editor. Those critics and I must apparently agree to differ as to the general ratio of

[1] It is possible that some readers might like to know which are the compositions here referred to. I will therefore give a list of them (which follows the order of their pagination in the *New Poems*, not in the present edition). They are twenty-six in number, viz., *The Summer is Ended*, *A Pause*, *Restive* (which is now reprinted as Section 3 of *Three Stages*), *Long Looked for*, *Let Patience have her Perfect Work*, *In an Artist's Studio*, *Meeting* (if we shall live, we live), *Under Willows*, *A Sketch*, *If I had Words*, *Now They Desire, Not Yours but You*, *By the Waters of Babylon*, *Birds of Paradise*, *Il Rosseggiar dell'Oriente*; and (more especially) *A Soul*, *Cobwebs*, *A Chilly Night*, *Acme*, *Introspective*, *To-day and To-morrow*, *En Route*, *By Way of Remembrance*, *Sleeping at Last*, *There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God* (Come, blessed sleep, most still, most perfect, come), and *The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness* (When all the overwork of life).

merit in the *New Poems*, and as to the question whether an editor is justified in publishing, after the death of the writer, compositions which had remained unpublished during the lifetime of the latter. I myself apprehend that (both in the case of my sister and of other writers) there may have been a variety of reasons why poems did not get published in their lifetime, which reasons do not continue to operate posthumously to any valid extent; and that the person who comes into possession of the poems of the deceased has a full right—amounting in some instances almost to a duty—to publish what he considers to be good enough for the purpose, and to be unexceptionable on other grounds.

In the volume *New Poems* there were some slight or out-of-the-way items—such as *Bouts-rimés Sonnets*, *An Alphabet for Children*, etc.—which, according to the plan of that book, were mixed up with poems of a more serious and artistic kind. In the present volume I have coupled those items, under the name of 'Minor Verse,' with the Poems for Children, and have thus, I hope, removed any substantial objection to their inclusion.

I may glance here at a point of typography in the present volume—a point which, although small, is not wholly trivial. The system followed as to the indenting of lines, so as to mark metre and rhyming, is far from uniform. In some instances no indenting whatever appears; in others it is consistently, in others again only partially, carried out. The discrepancy affects chiefly, on the one hand, those poems which were published by Christina herself, and, on the other hand, those which I put together in the *New Poems*—my preference being for a fully applied process of indenting. This process is more difficult of application to Christina's compositions than to most others, owing to the exceptional degree of latitude which she allowed herself in varying (and I think very generally with fine rhythmical effect) the number of feet in one and the same piece. Thus the marking of the length of lines by indenting would frequently conflict with a similar marking of the rhymes. When I had to deal with the proofs of the present volume I found that to attempt to make the scheme of indenting uniform throughout would involve an amount of trouble to the Printers as well as myself which seemed out of proportion to any contingent advantage: therefore, though somewhat reluctantly, I have left the indenting (or non-indenting) to reappear in much the same form as in the original volumes from which the present one is compiled.

The poems of Christina Rossetti are marked by certain key-notes of feeling which, although they could not be allowed to govern the arrange-

nt of the compositions in this edition, deserve to be borne in mind by readers; and among the readers there may be some who would like be furnished with a clue for following out, as the inclination prompts m at the moment, one or other of these trains of sentiment. It may haps be said that the two ideas most prevalent of all are the strenuous l onerous effort to attain to the salvation of the soul in heaven, and the ent absorbing devotion to the work and the very person of the Saviour us Christ. These ideas are diffused over the whole area of the horess's Devotional Poems, and are to be traced in other compositions well. It would, I think, be superfluous to call attention to particular ems embodying those paramount ideas, and I therefore limit myself to er ideas, subordinate, yet still marked and dominant,—some of them much importance in themselves, others not thus important but hly characteristic of Christina Rossetti. I will define them thus: (1) rsonal Experiences and Emotions; (2) Death; (3) The Aspiration for st (and her ideal of bliss appears to have consisted in ultimate rest, y less absolutely than in the promised fruition of heaven); (4) Vanity Vanities; (5) A Love of Animals, and more especially such animals as frequently regarded as odd or uncouth, rather than obviously attractive; Winter—almost invariably contemplated as dismal and repugnant; (7) e loveliness of the Rose. In the Appendix (C) I give a reference to principal instances (not by any means to all instances) in which these mes are prominently brought forward.

In my Notes at the end of the volume many details will be found bearing n the occasions which gave rise to particular poems, the significance of poems, etc. For such compositions as appeared in the volume of *New ms* the Notes appended to that volume are here re-used, with modifica- s and omissions.

Brief though the foregoing remarks are, they may perhaps serve as ng all that I need personally say about the Poems of my Sister. To them is neither my business nor my inclination. To analyse them in painstaking manner is outside my editorial scope—many of them have already sunk deep into the feelings and the memory, and I might the conscience, of poetic readers. I think it well, however, to add to Preface a condensed Memoir of Christina Rossetti. Up to the date of death little was publicly known about her, as she had led an extremely t and even a secluded life. Since then the Biography by my friend, Mackenzie Bell, has appeared—January 1898. When that work came

out some very erroneous opinions were expressed about it in the press
not of course in all the critiques, but in two or three of the most influent
The view thus propounded, and propounded in a very confident tone, v
that I had been a main performer in Mr. Bell's book: the voice might
the voice of Jacob, but the hands were the hands of Esau. The critics m
permit me to tell them that this was totally untrue. Their semi-omniscier
was at fault. The simple facts of the case are as follows:—Mr. Bell, sc
after Christina's death, formed the project of writing a biographical a
critical study of her. As he had known nothing personally of Christi
except during some thirteen months preceding her death, he was necessar
aware that his biographical materials must be obtained from some one els
and he very correctly opined that I knew much more about her than a
other person living, and that therefore it would be expedient to apply
me for a large majority of his information. He asked whether I wo
furnish such information, and I said yes; and in the course of his wo
he addressed to me a great number of questions, mostly in writing,
which I replied, also mostly in writing. At one stage of the matter I p
it very plainly to Mr. Bell that, while I was happy to return a direct a
full reply to most of his inquiries, I neither expected nor intended
regulate in any way the use he might make of my answers; and on t
plan I acted throughout, except that in some very few instances I fou
when he sent me the proofs of his book, that he had reproduced in
own off-hand terms some details (generally affecting outsiders) which
thought not fitted to be published in the same terms. These few instanc
I pointed out to Mr. Bell, and he, with the right feeling which invariab
marked his treatment of such matters, at once conformed to my vie
I observed in the proofs a great number of other instances in which
had quoted my precise phrases. In several of these cases my opinion w
that it would have been better, on literary or other grounds, if he h
simply worked up into his own narrative the facts which I placed at
disposal (without quoting my precise words, or even naming me as
informant), or if he had merely utilized my details so far as tacitly to av
making any mis-statement: but, faithful to my view that the book ou
to be his in the fullest sense, and in no sense mine, I advisedly abstai
from raising any objection or demur on this point. The critics to wh
I have referred, while treating Mr. Bell and his book with some fav
in the comparative if not the positive degree, fell foul of me in someth
not unlike the superlative degree—and this mainly on the grou

erroneously imagined by themselves, that most of the things which they disliked in the book had been foisted into it by me in a spirit of dictation at once arrogant and obtuse, and had by Mr. Bell been too tamely permitted to appear. Both Mr. Bell and I had reason to complain of these critics: Mr. Bell for being falsely credited with a degree of sheepish acquiescence which had tended to spoil his book, and I for being falsely arraigned of an offence not enacted by me but invented by my censors, who thereupon abused me for doing what I had not done, and for defects of mind and character evidenced by the imputed doing of it.

But all this is an old story, and barely worth referring to now. I glance at it chiefly because it has constituted one of my reasons for preferring on the present occasion to write something—a very little—about my sister in the way of biography. Mr. Bell's treatment of the subject is in many respects meritorious, but need not prevent a relative from stating a few facts in his own way. A reader of the poems ought to know who and what their authoress was. I propose to put him in possession of that amount of knowledge, and of little beyond that.

W. M. ROSSETTI.

LONDON, *September* 1903.

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The under-mentioned are now for the first time published :—

Nos. 27, 423, 604, 785, 788, 820, 827, 859, 873, 877, 927, 934.

All other poems, not above enumerated, were issued during the authoress's lifetime, whether in volumes or otherwise—very generally in volumes.

APPENDIX

A.—CONTENTS OF THE COLLECTED EDITION ISSUED BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

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Spring Quiet.
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Vanity of Vanities.
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'To-day for Me.'
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'The Master is come, and calleth for Thee.'
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'Italia, io ti saluto!'
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Golden Glories.
Johnny.
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. Helpmeet for him.	To-day's Burden.
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'ouching 'Never.'	'If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not.'
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Passing and Glassing.	'Take care of Him.'
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A Prodigal Son.	Why?
Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde.	'Love is strong as Death.'

B.—POEMS BY CHRISTINA ROSSETTI, EXTANT IN MS. (A FEW IN PRINT ALSO), BUT NOT USED IN THE PRESENT EDITION, NOR IN THE NEW POEMS PRINTED IN 1896.

	Date.
1. Heaven	1842
2. Corydon's Lament and Resolution	1843
3. Rosalind	,,
4. The Water-spirit's Song (an extract from this appears in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book)	1844
5. Pitia a Damone	,,
6. The Faithless Shepherdess	,,
7. Ariadne to Theseus	,,
8. A Hymn for Christmas Day	,,
9. Love and Death	,,
10. Despair	,,
11. Easter Morning	,,
12. Song (The faith of years is broken)	,,

		Date.
13.	A Tirsi	1845
14.	The Last Words of St. Telemachus	,,
15.	Lord Thomas and Fair Margaret	,,
16.	Charade [on the word 'Sonnet']	,,
17.	Hope in Grief	,,
18.	The Rose	1846
19.	On Lady Isabella	,,
20.	Divine and Human Pleading	,,
21.	The Ruined Cross	,,
22.	Amore e Dispetto	,,
23.	Sappho	,,
24.	Song (I saw her, she was lovely)	,,
25.	The Last Words of Sir Eustace Grey	,,
26.	Eva	,,
27.	Young men aye were fickle found	1847
28.	A Counsel	,,
29.	One of the Dead	,,
30.	The Trees' Counselling	,,
31.	O Death, where is thy Sting	1847 or 1848
32.	Peter the Hermit's Benediction	,, ,,
33.	Undine	1848
34.	Floral Teaching	,,
35.	Death	,,
36.	Nydia	,,
37.	Ellen Middleton	,,
38.	St. Andrew's Church	,,
39.	Grown Cold	,,
40.	Zara (The pale sad face of her I wronged)	,,
41.	Sleep, sleep	,,
42.	What Sappho would have said, had her leap cured instead of killing her	,,
43.	Ten Bouts-rimés Sonnets	1848-49

They begin with the following lines:—(1) Listen, and I will tell you of a face; (2) Strange voices sing among the planets which: (3) From early dawn until the flush of noon; (4) Surely there is an aching void within; (5) The spring is come again, not as at first; (6) You who look on past ages as a glass; (7) Who shall my wandering thoughts steady and fix; (8) Along the highroad the way is too long; (9) O thou who tell'st me that all hope is over; (10) O glorious sea that in each climbing wave.

44.	Sonnet (Some say that love and joy are one, and so)	1846
45.	The Last Complaint	,,
46.	Have you Forgotten?	,,
47.	A Year Afterwards	,,
48.	Charade (On the name Ægisthus)	,,
49.	A Dream (Oh for my love, my only love)	1851
50.	Song (I have loved you for long long years, Ellen)	1852
51.	Let them rejoice in their Beds	1853
52.	Like as we are (MS. incomplete)	,,
53.	All night I dream you love me well	,,

		Date.
54.	Epitaph	1853
55.	Our Heaven	1854
56.	Guesses	,,
57.	Zara (I dreamed that loving me he would love on)	1855
58.	An Answer (MS. incomplete)	1856
59.	The Massacre of Perugia (MS. incomplete)	1859
60.	Verses on a Picnic near Sunderland	,,
61.	Verses to W. B. Scott (dos-à-dos)	1866

C.—SOME LEADING THEMES, OR KEY-NOTES OF FEELING, IN THE POEMS OF CHRISTINA ROSSETTI

1. *Personal Experiences and Emotions.*—From House to Home—A Pageant (p. 54)—Monna Innominata—An Old-World Thicket (p. 65)—Later Life, Nos. 4, 12, 17, 21, 22, 27—Lines to my Grandfather—Wishes—I do set my Bow in the Cloud—Death is swallowed up in Victory—Two Pursuits—Afterward he repented, and went—Can I know it? Nay—Doeth well, . . . doeth better—Balm in Gilead—Thou knewest, thou oughtest therefore—Bury Hope out of sight—A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope—Old and New Year Ditties—A Better Resurrection—The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness (when all the over-work of life)—Our mothers, lovely women pitiful—For Henrietta Polydore—Ash-Wednesday (Jesus, do I love Thee?)—The offering of the New Law—For a Mercy received—Come unto Me—Who shall deliver me?—A Rose Plant in Jericho—Weigh all my Faults and Follies righteously—Lord, grant me grace to love Thee in my pain—Lord, make me one with thine own faithful ones—Three Stages—Looking Forward—Shut out—Downcast—Introspective—Memory—L. E. L.—Twilight Night—What would I give—A Sketch—Shall I forget?—En Route—Italia io ti Saluto—An Immurata Sister—By Way of Remembrance—Cor Mio (Still sometimes in my secret heart of hearts)—Meeting (I said good-bye in hope)—They desire a Better Country (I would not if I could undo my past)—Confluents—Valentines to my Mother—Parted—The Key-note—Yet a Little While (I dreamed and did not seek: to-day I seek)—One Seaside Grave—My Mouse—Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente.

2. *Death.*—Later Life, Nos. 26, 27—The Dead Bride—Night and Death—Song (The stream moaneth as it floweth)—Death is swallowed up in Victory—Sweet Death—Laughing Life cries at the Feast—Sooner or later, yet at last—God is our Hope and Strength—Song (When I am dead, my dearest)—Dream Land—After Death—Rest—Looking Forward—Life Hidden—Remember—Sound Sleep—Two Thoughts of Death—A Pause—Long looked for—The Last Look—A Peal of Bells—My Friend—At Home—Yet a Little While—Better so—Life and Death—Songs in a Cornfield (p. 370)—An Immurata Sister—Of my Life—Days of Vanity—Mirrors of Life and Death.

3. *The Aspiration for Rest.*—The Lotus-eaters—Sonnet from the Psalms—There remaineth therefore a Rest (In the grave will be no space)—There remaineth therefore a Rest for the People of God (Rest remains when all is done)—A Burden—In Patience—Weary in Well-doing—All Saints, Martyrs—Love loveth thee and Wisdom loveth thee—Three Stages, No. 3—Dream Land—Rest—Sound Sleep—From the Antique (The wind shall lull us yet)—Yet a Little While—To-day's Burden—Sleeping at Last—What will it be?

4. *Vanity of Vanities.*—The Lowest Room (p. 19)—One Certainty—A Testimony—Vanity of Vanities (Of all the downfalls in the world)—Sleep at Sea—Mother Country—Saints and Angels—If thou sayest, Behold we knew it not, No. 3—A Vain Shadow—Vanity of Vanities (Ah! woe is me for pleasure that is vain)—Maiden May—Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde—Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente, No. 20.

5. *Love of Animals.*—Goblin Market (p. 2)—From House to Home (p. 21)—A Pageant (pp. 48 to 50)—An Old-World Thicket—All Thy Works praise Thee, O Lord (p. 71)—Later Life, No. 20—These all wait upon Thee—Twilight Calm—To what purpose is this Waste?—My Dream (Hear now a curious dream I dreamed last night)—The Lambs of Grasmere—A Chill—Summer (Winter is cold-hearted)—Bird or Beast—Eve—A Green Cornfield—Bird Raptures—Valentines to my Mother, 1885—Mirrors of Life and Death—Freaks of Fashion—A Frog's Fate—Brother Bruin—Child's Talk in April—Winter (Sweet blackbird is silenced with chaffinch and thrush)—Minnie and Mattie—Hopping Frog, hop here and be seen—When the Cows come home the milk is coming—Hurt no Living Thing—A poor old Dog—Mole and Earthworm.

6. *Winter.*—Later Life, No. 19—Bitter for Sweet—Seasons (In Springtime when the leaves are young)—Seasons (Crocuses and snowdrops wither)—Winter Rain—Seasons (Oh the cheerful budding-time)—A Year's Windfalls—What's in a name?—There is a budding morrow in Midnight—Winter (Sweet blackbird, etc.).

7. *The Loveliness of the Rose.*—Three Nuns (p. 15)—Gone for ever—The Solitary Rose—As the Apple-tree among the Trees of the Wood—A Rose Plant in Jericho—Have Patience—Queen Rose—Three Moments—A Year's Windfalls—Maiden May—Brandons both—An October Garden—Summer is Ended—To my Fior-di-Lisa—Hope is like a Harebell trembling from its Birth—The Lily has a smooth Stalk.

MEMOIR

ABRIELE ROSSETTI and his wife Frances Mary Lavinia (Polidori), marry-
g in April 1826, had four children. They were: Maria Francesca, born
7 February 1827; Gabriel Charles Dante (better known as Dante
abriel), 12 May 1828; William Michael, 25 September 1829; and
hristina Georgina, 5 December 1830. These were all born at No.
8 Charlotte Street, Portland Place, London. Christina, like the other
ildren, was baptized in the Church of England. Her two godmothers
ere Lady Dudley Stuart, originally the Princess Christine Bonaparte, a
ughter of Lucian, and of course niece of the great Napoleon—Rossetti
ing well known to several members of this world-famous family; and
iss Georgina Macgregor, a daughter of Sir Patrick Macgregor, and pupil
Mrs. Rossetti, who had before marriage been a governess in that house.

In my Memoir of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, published along with his
amily Letters in 1895, I have given various particulars about our father
abriele Rossetti, and a few about our mother. I shall not repeat them
ere, beyond what is necessary for my immediate purpose. Gabriele
ossetti was a native of Vasto in the Abruzzi, kingdom of Naples, born
ebruary 1783. His origin was quite undistinguished, his father being a
lacksmith and locksmith, and his maternal grandfather a shoemaker; he
ad however, I believe, some hereditary connection with a family of more
osition, named Della Guardia, and either in the Rossetti or in the Della
uardia line of a previous period there had been some sort of local literary
ote. Gabriele Rossetti showed an early aptitude for drawing, and also
r verse. He went towards 1803 to Naples, and held for a short time
e official post of librettist to the Operatic Theatre of San Carlo, and for
much longer term that of custodian of Ancient Bronzes in the Naples
Iuseum. He published in Naples some of his poetical compositions, but
as more especially known and admired as an improvisatore. In 1820
e adhered to the movement, started by a military uprising, for obtaining
Constitution for the kingdom of Naples. The Bourbon king, Ferdinand I.,
ranted and swore to the Constitution; and then rapidly revoked it, and
eated its promoters as criminals. In the summer of 1821 Rossetti had

to escape from Naples in disguise; sojourned for a while in Malta; and early in 1824 came over to London. He married the second daughter of Gaetano Polidori; he being at the time forty-three years of age, and she much younger, barely twenty-six. Polidori had, in his youth, been secretary to the celebrated dramatic poet Alfieri; he was a teacher of Italian in London, and author of many books, and had been the father of Dr. John Polidori, who became Byron's travelling physician in 1816, made some name as author of *The Vampyre*, and committed suicide in 1821.

In London Gabriele Rossetti (having no private means of subsistence whatever, and his wife nothing in hand, and only a modest contingent expectation) followed the same career as his father-in-law—that of teaching Italian. He was appointed Professor of Italian in King's College, London, in 1831; but this added little to his occupations, and next to nothing to his income. He published several books, both verse and prose. The verse procured him very considerable celebrity in Italy as a patriotic poet; the prose—largely concerned with the interpretation of Dante and other mediæval writers as being members of a secret school of daring speculators in politics and religion—was prohibited in Italy (and so indeed was the verse), but made a good deal of stir in England, earning some few partizans here and there, and a fair number of adversaries. Rossetti did not naturalize himself as an Englishman, but remained an Italian, and a highly patriotic Italian; neither did he protestantize, though in open and frequently published opposition to the papal system and pretensions.

Such was the household into which Christina Rossetti was born; a household of narrow means, according to the English standard of income and living (I suppose the years were very few in which Rossetti made, from all sources, more than an annual £300, and it must generally have been less); of no display and no inclination for display; of careful but not stingy economy—the father being highly inexpensive in all personal habits, and the mother an assiduous housewife from day to day and from year to year; of infallibly upright dealing and no indebtedness; of substantial but not self-indulgent comfort; of steady continuous occupation; of a high standard of right; of serious thinking and many intellectual interests—few of any other sort. These brief words of attestation are no more than my due to my parents; to point out the defects of my father, or to discover some in my mother, is not incumbent upon me, nor indeed is there anything of this kind which needs to be stated as relevant to the home-life of Christina Rossetti. I should add that Mrs. Rossetti (who was of wholly English extraction on her mother's side, as of wholly Italian extraction on her father's) was born and bred in London, and was of a decidedly English rather than Italian type of person and character; her education was good, her mind fully formed. The mutual affection and esteem of husband and wife were solid and unvarying; there was little dissent between them—except indeed an abstract dissent on subjects of religion—and quarrelling

and nagging were unknown. Rossetti was mainly a free-thinker, although much in sympathy with the moral and spiritual teachings of the Gospel; his wife was a devout but not a sanctimonious member of the Church of England—the dominant tone of which was, towards the date of Christina's birth, the 'evangelical,' the 'high church' being as yet dormant.

Christina, as being the youngest of the four children, could not fail to be influenced to some extent, in her earliest years, by the qualities of her sister and brothers, as well as of her parents. Maria was mentally a precocious child, learning very early and easily all such matters as reading, writing, speaking two languages, etc.; indeed she was from first to last much the best of the four at all matters of acquired knowledge of that sort. She was of an upright and affectionate, but naturally a rather jealous, disposition, and of enthusiastic temperament; plunging with great ardour, before reaching the age of twelve or eleven, into such themes as the career of Napoleon, the Iliad, Grecian mythology, etc. From her earliest years she was devout; and, after being confirmed (towards 1840), she made religion her paramount concern, attending little in comparison to anything else. The character of Gabriel is perhaps pretty well understood by readers at the present day. In childhood as in manhood he was ardent, impulsive, dominant, generous, good-natured; not unfrequently passionate; determined to be a painter; eagerly susceptible to anything of a poetic, imaginative, or fanciful kind, but not to what partook of abstract or scientific knowledge. Of myself I will say nothing, except that I was a somewhat demure little boy, not quarrelsome and not teazing, and, as nearest to Christina in age, was regarded by her as a kind of ally against the thews, sinews, and dictation (such as they were), of our two very juvenile seniors.

The earliest years of a child's life are doubtless of great consequence in forming lines of character which afterwards deepen; but those very earliest years do not remain clear to the consciousness of the adult. Let us then, ignoring those first years, imagine Christina Rossetti at the age of five years completed, or about as far back as she would plainly remember in after life, and define a little of what she saw around her. It is the beginning of the year 1836, in which the family moved from No. 38 Charlotte Street to No. 50, a rather larger house, but still a small one. The father is now no less than fifty-three years old, the mother thirty-six.

The Rossetti household was thoroughly unconventional, living plainly and comfortably within their own walls, and being very little visible to outsiders. No Rossetti, and also no Polidori, had any idea of 'keeping in the fashion'; one or other of them (but this does not rightly apply to my mother) would have been found in 1860 dressing in very much the same mode as in 1835. Hence a kind of family tradition, which to some extent—though it was but a very minor extent in comparison—clung to Christina in her adult years. Our father was either occupied out-of-doors teaching, or was indoors writing about Dante, Freemasonry, and other light topics.

He was kind in his family, open-hearted, very animated in mind and manner, and on the whole cheerful, in spite of the bitterness of exile and the wrestle with fortune. The mother went out into society hardly at all, being wholly devoted to her domestic duties, with husband and four young children. The education of her two daughters was, from first to last, entirely her work—allowing for some trifles, such as singing and dancing lessons, and these had no appreciable sequel. There was nothing of the ascetic about her, nor yet any disregard for the social proprieties, as ordinarily accepted and applied: but an extreme indifference to 'showing off,' or putting herself forward in any way whatever, and a perfect willingness to forego all sorts of diversions and social distractions; her duties, her requisite occupations, and the cultivation of her mind by miscellaneous readings in three languages, sufficed her. The children were constantly with their parents; there was no separate nursery, and no rigid line drawn between the big ones and the little ones. Of English society there was extremely little — barely one or two families that we saw something of at moderate intervals; but of Italian society — in the sense of Italians who hunted up and haunted our father as an old acquaintance or a celebrity — the stream was constant and copious. Singular personages these Italians (with occasionally some foreigner of a different nationality) were, in many instances; almost all of them eager after something — few or none eager after those things which occupy the thoughts of the average Englishman — to increase his income, to rise a grade higher in social position, to set his children going in one of the approved grooves, to relax over the sporting columns of a newspaper. There were exiles, patriots, politicians, literary men, musicians, and some of inferior standing; fleshy good-natured Neapolitans, keen Tuscans, emphatic Romans. As we children were habituated from our earliest years to speaking Italian with our father, we were able to follow all or most of the speech of these 'natives'; and a conspirator or a semi-brigand might present himself, and open out on his topics of predilection, without our being told to leave the room. All this — even apart from our chiefly Italian blood—made us, no doubt, not a little different from British children in habit of thought and standard of association; and, when Dante and Christina Rossetti proved, as poetic writers, somewhat devious from the British tradition and the insular mind, we may say, if not 'so much the better,' at any rate, 'no wonder.'

Apart from her sister and brothers, Christina had no relatives of nearly her own age. She received plenty of affection from her maternal grandparents and maiden aunts. Most of this branch of the family lived in those years in the country—at Holmer Green, near Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire. Through staying there from time to time Christina came to know something, and to love much, of rural appearances—gardens, poultry, ponds, frogs, etc.; but this came to an end in 1839, when the Polidoris removed back into London, and from that time onward her experiences of

anything countrified were decidedly sparse and scanty. Our father never took his family out of town for annual jaunts, as for instance to the seaside; there was little money to spend on any such relaxations, and not much disposition to be on the move. Later on (as may readily be guessed) Christina visited several of the ordinary seaside or other resorts: Brighton, Hastings, Clifton, Cheltenham, Sevenoaks, Torquay, etc.; she was a little in Scotland, never in Ireland. In childhood she was of a lively, and a somewhat capricious or even fractious, temper; but she was warm-natured, engaging, and a general favourite, considerably prettier than her elder sister Maria. She was by far the least bookish of the family—liking a few things heartily, such as *The Arabian Nights* and the lyric dramas of Metastasio, but generally not applying herself with assiduity to either her books or her studies. She 'picked up' things rather than acquired them.

I will give here three small anecdotes of Christina's childhood. They may be 'puerile' or 'silly,' yet are characteristic in their way, and have a kind of bearing upon her faculty as a writer. It appears to me that at the dates of the first two incidents my own age was still under seven, so Christina's was under six: in the third instance she may have been between seven and eight.

1. One day Mrs. Cipriani Potter (the wife of the Principal of the Royal Academy of Music, who was my godfather) called upon my mother. Christina was in the room, and our household tabby cat, who, being of mature age, wore that aspect of self-collected gravity with which we are all familiar. Christina made the remark, 'The cat looks very sedate,' and I can still remember the glance of amused surprise with which Mrs. Potter greeted the use, by such infantine lips, of such a 'dictionary-word,' so appositely introduced. 2. It appears to me that the very first verses composed and spoken by Christina (she was too young to *write* them) were these—they do not profess to be rhyme, but are metre, and correct metre:—

> Cecilia never went to school
> Without her gladiator.

There was no reason for coupling 'gladiator' with 'Cecilia.' The Christian name had been found, I fancy, in a book which we then often skimmed, named *The Looking-Glass for the Mind*, and something or other about gladiators had recently been heard by Christina, and the word (if nothing else) had hit her fancy. She understood this much—that a 'gladiator' would be a man capable of showing some fight for 'Cecilia' upon an emergency. Unmeaning as the lines and the association are, they are not without hinting at a certain oddity or whimsicality of combination which (mingled indeed with qualities of a very different kind) can be not unfrequently traced in the verse of her mature years. 3. Possibly the earliest thing which Christina wrote (or rather, I think, got some one to write from

first began in 1848, before she was aged eighteen, and ended in 1850, or possibly late in 1849. The second must have commenced[1] towards the close of 1862; except as a matter of feeling, it terminated towards the opening of 1867.

James Collinson was a painter, who fell in love with Christina soon after being introduced to her. He was chiefly a domestic painter, and had been enrolled in the 'Præraphaelite Brotherhood,' formed towards September 1848. He had originally been a member of the Church of England, and a devout one; but, before making acquaintance with Christina, he had been converted to Roman Catholicism. On explaining his feelings, he was informed that this difference in church-faith formed an obstacle not to be got over. From this fact it might appear that Christina—who already belonged to what was then called the Puseyite or Tractarian party in the English Church, or (as we should now say) the High Church party or Anglo-Catholics—was decidedly hostile to Roman Catholicism. I do not, however, think she was that. I consider that she held then—as she certainly did in later years—that the Roman Catholics are authentic members of the one veritable Church of Christ, but in some matters erroneous; she was, for instance, firmly opposed to anything savouring of Mariolatry. I do not see that her religious tenets were such as to make marriage with a Roman Catholic, in itself, distasteful to her, or contrary to her sense of duty: she may rather perhaps have been influenced by the consideration that, in the event of giving birth to children, she would be at odds with her husband as to the faith in which these should be brought up, with consequences which might expose their souls to peril and scathe. Anyhow she declined Collinson's offer, although, on general grounds, very well disposed towards him. Collinson then seems to have supposed that, after all, his religious convictions were not incompatible with membership in the English Church: he reverted to it, proposed to Christina again, and was accepted. But after a moderate while he found once more that his conscience pricked him, and he must at all hazards be a Roman Catholic. Such he re-became, and Christina (whose force of will, especially where any point of duty seemed to be concerned, was in full proportion to the family motto, *Frangas non flectas*) cancelled the engagement. I will not harshly condemn James Collinson for these successive tergiversations: he was a right-meaning man, of timorous conscience. But he had none the less struck a staggering blow at Christina Rossetti's peace of mind on the very threshold of womanly life, and a blow from which she did not fully recover for years. He died in 1881.

printed on the subject, prior to a note which I inserted in the volume *New Poems*, 1896. In that note I indicated the main facts very briefly, not giving names. It appears to me that there is now no serious reason for withholding the names. I therefore state them, along with the other particulars.

[1] See the series of Italian compositions, *Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*.

I must next deal with a personage of higher type, Charles Bagot Cayley, a man of letters and an author, but less author than scholar. Christina may first have known him as far back as 1847 or so, and again in 1854: but the two did not meet much until some such date as 1860. Towards 1847 he had been a pupil of my father for Italian; and he became an excellent Italian scholar (indeed a remarkable linguist generally), and produced a most able translation of Dante's *Comedia* in the original metre. He was a singularly unworldly person, which was no doubt in my sister's eyes a merit, and not a blemish. His precise religious opinions are not clear to me: he had been brought up in the Church of England. I suppose that, like so many other men of inquiring mind, he regarded all religions as much the same thing—a mixture of feeling with thought, and also with assumption and legend, not with verification. He may have considered Christianity the best of all religions, but not as being on a different plane from others, absolute truth as contrasted with fallacy. In course of time he proposed to Christina. She loved him deeply and permanently, but, on his declaring himself, she must no doubt have probed his faith, and found it either strictly wrong or wofully defective. So she declined his suit, but without ceasing to see and to cherish him as a friend. Knowing the state of her heart when the proposal was made, I urged her to marry, and offered that they should both, if money difficulties stood in the way, share my home. But she had made up her mind on grounds which she recognized as higher than any considerations of either feeling or expediency, and she remained immovable. Years passed: she became an elderly and an old woman, and she loved the scholarly recluse to the last day of his life, 5 December 1883, and, to the last day of her own, his memory.

It may be added that Christina was extremely reticent in all matters in which her affections were deeply engaged. Of these two cases I knew a good deal directly, and could indirectly judge of much more; but it would have been both indelicate and futile to press her with inquiries, and of several details in the second case—though important to a close understanding of it—I never was cognizant.

As Mr. Cayley was so important a personage in the hushed life-drama of Christina Rossetti, I will here insert a portion of the obituary notice of him which I wrote, and which was printed in *The Athenæum*:—'Mr. Charles Bagot Cayley, B.A., of Trinity College, Cambridge, died suddenly, and apparently without any serious forewarning, of heart disease, in the night of the 4th-5th December, in his lodging at South Crescent, Bedford Square: he was found dead in the morning, having expired, it would seem, in perfect calm during sleep. This gentleman was the son of a Russia merchant, and younger brother of the celebrated mathematician, the Sadlerian Professor at Cambridge. He was born on 9 July 1823, and had therefore completed his sixtieth year. Several of his early years were passed in

Russia. . . . He published, many years ago, a volume of original poems named *Psyche's Interludes*. Some of the same compositions, with others added, re-appeared lately in a privately printed volume. Mr. Cayley was for many years past an active and valued member of the Philological Society. . . . A more complete specimen than Mr. Charles Cayley of the abstracted scholar in appearance and manner—the scholar who constantly lives an inward and unmaterial life, faintly perceptive of external facts and appearances—could hardly be conceived. He united great sweetness to great simplicity of character, and was not less polite than unworldly. In a small circle of intimates his death leaves a mournful blank: they "will not look upon his like again."'

Apart from these two matters, the life of Christina Rossetti presents hardly any incident. Her life had two motive powers,—religion and affection: hardly a third. And even the religion was far more a thing of the heart than of the mind: she clung to and loved the Christian creed because she loved Jesus Christ. 'Christ is God' was her one dominant idea. Faith with her was faith pure and absolute: an entire acceptance of a thing revealed -not a quest for any confirmation or demonstrative proof. There were few things she more disliked than an 'Evidences of Christianity': I dare say she never read one, but she must have glanced at one or other sufficiently to know that she disliked it. To learn that something in the Christian faith was credible *because it was reasonable*, or because it rested upon some historic evidence of fact, went against her. Her attitude of mind was: 'I believe because I am told to believe, and I know that the authority which tells me to believe is the only real authority extant, God.' To press her—'How do you know that it is God?' would have been no use; the ultimate response could only have come to this—'My faith is faith; it is not evolved out of argumentation, nor does it seek the aid of that.' If she did not admit of discussion of her own belief, neither did she indulge in any discussion of the belief of others: no one knows this better than myself, with whom the field for debate, had she been minded to it, would have been a very large one. In fact, though enormously strict with herself in matters of religious faith and dogma, she was not intolerant of difference of opinion in others: she met on terms of close or amicable good-will many persons whom she knew to be decided disbelievers, not to speak of earnest and devout Dissenters. The Christian believer has before him two things: one, the promise of ecstatic bliss: the other, the decree of excessive misery. Some believers, perceiving themselves to be undoubted Christians in faith, become serenely or perhaps exuberantly happy in their inner selves: it may be said that Maria Rossetti was of these, for (at any rate in her later years) she felt the firmest confidence of salvation. Not so Christina, who always distrusted herself, and her relation to that standard of Christian duty which she constantly acknowledged and professed. In this regard her tone of mind was mainly

despondent: it was painfully despondent in the last few months of her life, but as to that the physical minor reasons may have been as truly operative as the spiritual major reason. All her life long she felt—or rather she exaggerated—her deficiencies or backslidings: she did not face religion with that courageous yet modest front with which a virtuous woman, who knows something of the world, faces life. Passages can no doubt be found in her writings in which she is more hopeful than abased; in which her ardent aspirations towards heaven so identify her with its bliss that she seems to be almost there, or on the very threshold. These passages are of course perfectly genuine; but they are coupled with an awful sense of unworthiness, shadowed by an awful uncertainty. I will not dwell upon slighter matters –those which constituted her a 'devotee' in the ordinary sense—her perpetual church-going and communions, her prayers and fasts, her submission to clerical direction, her oblations, her practice of confession. It should be said that, while she had an intense reverence for the priestly function, she cared next to nothing about hierarchical distinctions: anything which assimilated the clerical order to a 'learned profession' forming part of the British constitution left her indifferent, or rather inimical.

I have often thought that Christina's proper place was in the Roman Catholic Church, yet I never traced any inclination in her to join it, nor did she ever manifest any wish to enter upon the conventual life—I think she held herself unworthy of attempting it. Her satisfaction in remaining a member of the English Church may have been due partly to her deep affection for her mother, who, though gradually conforming to the external practices of the High Church section, was far indeed from wishing to Romanize.

I have said that, along with religion, affection was the motive power of Christina's life. For all her kith and kin, but for her mother far beyond all the rest, her love was as deep as it was often silent. She was not demonstrative, though of a fondling habit as regards her mother. To the latter it may truly be said that her whole life was devoted: they were seldom severed, even for a few days together. When at last, in 1886, death divided them, she tended her two aged aunts with like assiduity, although it was impossible that her outflow of love towards either of them should have had any similar force and glow. Maria she was truly fond of, and she regarded her latterly as almost a saint; of Dante Gabriel she was, so far as natural predilection goes, still fonder—and I might say the same of myself. It will easily be understood that, much as she saw of *him* after they were both grown up, she saw far more of me, for until 1876 (and allowing for the short interval in 1853-54) she and I were always residing together.

Like her mother, Christina went very little into society; none the less she knew and appreciated several leading personages, whom I will name in the order of date (approximately) when she made acquaintance with them: all the members of the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, Madox Brown

with his family,[1] Coventry Patmore, Professor Masson, Burne-Jones, William Morris, Ruskin (I question whether she saw him more than once), Dodgson, Dr. Garnett, Robert Browning (but, unfortunately, not Mrs. Browning), Swinburne, Jean Ingelow, Gosse, Watts-Dunton, Shields, Hall Caine. Many others could be named—Dr. Adolf Heimann, Canon Burrows, W. Bell Scott, James Hannay, J. R. Clayton, William Allingham, Dr. John Epps, Mrs. Bodichon, John L. Tupper, the Howitts, John Brett, Thomas and John Seddon, Henrietta Rintoul, Arthur Hughes, Adelaide Procter, Alexander Macmillan (her publisher, with whom she always had very amicable relations), William Ralston, Stillman, Anne Gilchrist, Dora Greenwell, Miss Alice Boyd, Mrs. Cameron, the Rev. Orby Shipley, Dr. Littledale, James Smetham, Hueffer, the Rev. Alfred Gurney, Dr. Hake, Prebendary Glendinning Nash (her clergyman in late years), Lady Mount-Temple, William Sharp, Professor Dunstan, Lisa Wilson, Miss Ellen Proctor, Mackenzie Bell. From a perusal of this list the reader will correctly infer that after the death of our father we saw little—next to nothing—of Italian society. There was, however, our cousin Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti, a leader in an Italian Evangelical movement, for whom and his Scottish wife Christina felt a sincere attachment. The physician whom my sister consulted was for many years Sir William Jenner: there were also Dr. Hare, Dr. Crellin, Dr. Wilson Fox, Dr. Stewart, and others; and at the very last Dr. Abbott Anderson.

In company she was quiet, and reserved rather than otherwise, but made every now and then some remark which arrested attention. She was as a fact extremely shy. Most people probably perceived as much; but she preserved a calm and collected demeanour, which may perhaps have imposed upon some of the unwary, and induced them to fancy her distant rather than backward. Upon her reputation as a poetess she never presumed, nor did she ever volunteer an allusion to any of her performances: in a roomful of mediocrities she consented to seem the most mediocre as the most unobtrusive of all.

In a life marked by so few external incidents, such matters as the deaths of relatives and friends count for much: I will mention the leading occurrences of this kind, along with some changes of residence, and the like—all in a very summary form. 1853, death of the Polidoris, grandmother and grandfather. 1854 (as already specified), death of our father, Gabriele Rossetti. Later in the same year Christina wished to join her aunt Eliza Polidori in going out as a nurse to Scutari, in connection with the Crimean War, under the scheme planned out by Miss Nightingale; but she was pronounced to be below the stipulated age, so this did not take effect. 1861, Christina's first foreign trip, with our mother and

[1] To avoid tediousness, I do not mention the family in the several instances; but it may be taken that very generally, when a married person is mentioned, the family also was known to Christina.

myself, to Paris, Rouen, Normandy (especially Coutances), and Jersey. 1862, death of Lizzie Rossetti, the wife of Dante Gabriel. After this loss Dante proposed that the family, amalgamating with him, should seek a new residence. There would have been our mother, all her children, and our somewhat invalided eldest aunt, Margaret Polidori, who as yet occupied separate apartments in my house in Albany Street: she would have continued separate to a like degree. Dante wished also that Mr. Algernon Swinburne should be in the house—for, as he truly said, he himself required some amount of intellectual incitement and diversion beyond what the family could minister to him. To this proposal Christina, with the rest of us, assented; but it was soon set aside, as Dante came to prefer a different arrangement. 1865, Christina's second and last foreign trip, in the same company as before, to North Italy (Como, Pavia, Brescia, Verona, Milan, etc.), going out by the St. Gothard route (no tunnel was then in existence), and returning by the Splügen route, Schaffhausen, Strasbourg, etc. 1867, death of Margaret Polidori, a very diligent religionist and church-goer; and removal of Christina, with our mother, Maria, and myself, to No. 56 Euston Square (now called 5 Endsleigh Gardens), a much more commodious house than any we had previously occupied. 1873, in view of my impending marriage to Lucy, daughter of the painter Ford Madox Brown, Maria resolved to carry at once into execution a project she had long entertained, that of entering the Anglican Sisterhood of All Saints. 1874, my marriage: my mother and Christina continued to reside with us, but they not unfrequently spent a week or two with my mother's two sisters, Charlotte and Eliza Polidori, who (after my wedding and their consequent removal from 56 Euston Square) had taken a house, 12 Bloomsbury Square. Oliver Madox Brown, who was godson to Maria (only son of Ford Madox Brown), died in November; and in the same year Christina's cousin, still under thirty, Henrietta Polydore. 1876, family considerations led to the dividing of our household: my wife and daughter, with myself, remaining in Endsleigh Gardens, while my mother and Christina moved off at Michaelmas to No. 30 Torrington Square. Hardly were they settled there when the illness from which Maria had been suffering for many weeks took a fatal turn, and she died in November. 1882, death of Dante Gabriel at Birchington-on-Sea, 9 April, after several weeks' affectionate nursing by our mother and Christina. 1883, death of my infant son Michael. As his end approached, Christina implored me to allow her to baptize him; to this I raised no objection, and she performed the rite unwitnessed save by a nurse, and I doubt whether any act of her life yielded her more heartfelt satisfaction. 1885, death of our uncle, Henry Polydore, a Roman Catholic. 1886, 8 April, death of our mother, a loss to Christina which I forbear from dwelling upon. 1889, death of Franz Hueffer, the man of letters and musical expert and critic, husband of my wife's half-sister. 1890, death of Charlotte Polidori, aged eighty-seven,

after some years of confinement to her bed, a most amiable good woman, less out-of-the world than other Polidoris, but not less religious; also death of our friend ever since 1847, William Bell Scott, a man whom Christina viewed with great predilection. When in 1892 his *Autobiographical Notes* were published, containing (as I informed her) several unkind and not too accurate passages about Dante Rossetti, she refused to look at the book, swayed, I think, as much by respect for Scott's memory as for her brother's. 1893, death of Eliza Polidori, aged eighty-three, after an illness still longer than Charlotte's, and more wearing to herself, and to Christina as her constant attendant; also death of Ford Madox Brown. With the decease of Eliza Polidori, her last relative of the elder generation, the income of Christina (which had been tolerable enough since 1886) increased, and henceforward she had more than what sufficed for her very moderate requirements. At all periods of her life she had been 'a cheerful giver,' as far as her means allowed. Until a late date these means allowed but little: when they allowed ten-fold, she gave (I dare say) twenty-fold. 1894, April, death of my beloved wife. This is a long mortuary catalogue; but many other deaths took place afflicting to Christina, few more so than those of her early and unfailing friends -Dr. Adolf Heimann, who had been Professor of German at University College, London; and Canon Burrows of Rochester, who had for many years been the Incumbent of the church — Christ Church, Albany Street—which she frequented from about 1843 to 1867 or later.

The Canon died at an advanced age in a year when Christina's own health and energies were little fitted to bear any strain. She was invited in 1892 to write a biography of him, and would have felt much pleasure in doing so, but she found it imperative to decline. Another project which miscarried, at nearly the same date, was the proposal made by our admirable painter, George F. Watts, the recorder of so many faces of pre-eminent men and women, that Christina should sit to him for her portrait. She was worthy to do so, and, spite of her life-long shrinking from any sort of notoriety, was anything but indifferent to the distinction thus offered her; but here again considerations of health and rapidly-ebbing life interposed an insuperable barrier. If any one thinks that Christina Rossetti was not the only loser by the failure of this project, I share his opinion.

It does not seem necessary, in this brief Memoir, to dwell upon any of the other incidents of her life—all in themselves insignificant. It was a life which did not consist of incidents: in few things, external: in all its deeper currents, internal.

I am now approaching the end. To a chronic affection of the heart, with a recurrent sense of suffocation (but this had not of late seemed so formidable as at some earlier periods), were added early in 1892 uneasy but not exactly painful sensations, which required to be explained. Medical

advice being taken, the explanation came: the case was one of cancer—a word which had always been pronounced in the family with a certain shrinking. Christina took the announcement most bravely. In May 1892 an operation of a very severe kind was performed by the distinguished surgeon Mr. Lawson—skilfully and successfully performed. After rallying from the shock to the system, Christina went on with an approach to comparative ease for some months, although it was too clearly foreseen that the malady would return. It did so towards the autumn of 1893: no further operation was then practicable, and only palliatives could be applied. Dropsy of the left arm and hand complicated her other illness. In August 1894 she took finally to her bed, in a calm and resigned mood, but, as the time advanced, with troublous agitation, both of the spirit and of the bodily frame. Not that she was ever abashed by pain, or craven-hearted—far indeed from that; but the terrors of her religion compassed her about, to the overclouding of its radiances. At the close of a week of collapse and semi-consciousness, she died without a struggle, in the act of inarticulate prayer, on the early morning of 29 December 1894—her attached nurse alone being present at the moment.

She was buried in Highgate Cemetery, in the same grave to which had been successively consigned her father, her sister-in-law Lizzie, and her mother. A reredos-painting, as a memorial of her, has been set up by subscription in Christ Church, Woburn Square. The design of it was supplied by an old acquaintance of hers, Sir Edward Burne-Jones; the actual painting is by Mr. T. M. Rooke. It is a very appropriate and fine design,—Christ uttering the words of consecration of the eucharistic elements, and the four Evangelists as recorders of the event.

Christina Rossetti was of an ordinary female middle height—slim in youth, but, in middle and advanced age, often rather over-plump; this had been the tendency of both her parents. Some people thought her extremely like her mother; I myself never saw this strongly—the mother's features were the more regular of the two, but not perhaps the more agreeable in combination. My sister's complexion was dark and uniform—yet much less dark than Maria's—and after early youth her cheeks were colourless. Her hair was a dark brown, with a good deal of gloss; not remarkably plenteous in youth, and only a little altered by age—to the last it was essentially brown, not grey. The same had been the case with her mother. Her eyes were originally a bluish grey (portraits show this); but in adult years they might rather be called a greyish hazel, or a richly hazelled grey, and towards the close they may have told out to most persons as being a warm brown, of dark tint. They were always of full size; and, after the attack of exophthalmic bronchocele which began in 1871, they were over-prominent—even somewhat distressingly so at times, but by no means always. The forehead was ample, the lips not noticeably full, with a firm and also a sensitive expression, the chin rather prolonged and pointed in

girlhood, but this was little or not at all observable later on; the facial contour shapely. Her nose was not far from being straight, but taking a slight outward curve towards the tip. Her hands were delicate; and her figure might be called good, without being remarkably fine. She had a good speaking and reading voice—singing she never attempted, apart from the ordinary congregational singing in church. Indeed, I believe that her speaking voice, though not nearly so rich and impressive as Maria's, was considered in youth uncommonly fine in tone and modulation; in her later years there was a certain degree of strain and fatigue in it, but, to many persons who only knew her in those years, this may hardly have been apparent. Her utterance was clear; her delivery—as indeed her whole aspect and demeanour—marked unmistakably by sincerity, consideration for others, and a modest but not the less definite self-regard. I recollect having once told her jocularly (she was perhaps barely seventeen at the time) that 'she would soon become so polite it would be impossible to live with her.' She was one of the last persons with whom any one would feel inspirited to take a liberty, though one might, without any sort of remonstrance, treat her as the least important of womankind.

A question has sometimes been raised as to the amount of good looks with which Christina Rossetti should be credited. She was certainly not what one understands by 'a beauty'; the term handsome did not apply to her, nor yet the term pretty. Neither was she 'a fine woman.' She has sometimes been called 'lovely' in youth; and this is true, if a refined and correct mould of face, along with elevated and deep expression, is loveliness. She was assuredly much nearer to being beautiful than ugly; and this, in my opinion, remained true of her throughout her life, for in advanced years her expression naturally deepened, although the traces left upon her by disease, as well as by time, marred her comeliness. However, there are several portraits of her which can be appealed to to settle the question of her good looks; and, as I can speak of the matter with knowledge, I will give a list of them—they are in my own possession, unless otherwise notified.

1. The earliest portrait is a full-face taken by Filippo Pistrucci (the brother of the celebrated medallist), towards 1837. The best version of this water-colour, which has an agreeable childish look, belongs to my daughter, Signora Agresti, of Rome. It was reproduced in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book; the colour has now faded considerably. W. Bell Scott made an etching of it, and I possess another water-colour nearly similar—perhaps a preliminary study for the head. The hair is of a rather bright warm tint.

2. Pistrucci again tried his hand at Christina's face, towards 1843, water-colour, but made a woful failure; the mouth especially being misdrawn, with a conceited smirking expression. This head is so bad that, but for its being mounted from of old in the same frame with the heads of

the other three children, I should prefer to destroy it, or at any rate hide it away. It shows that by this date Christina's hair was no longer bright, but decidedly brown.

3. Towards 1846, or possibly 1845, Dante Gabriel made a careful pencil-drawing of the head, profile. It is a good likeness, rather (I think) below the level of Christina's attractiveness at that time. It is also a good drawing, but of course does not display the finer qualities of Dante's art, which developed at a later date. This drawing is reproduced in the volume named *Gabriele Rossetti*, brought out by me in 1901.

4. There is a pretty little pencil-drawing by him, of Christina seated in an easy-chair, in a semi-dozing pose. Her general air is well realized, without any great definition of the face. This I take to be as late as 1847.

5. As a frontispiece to her privately printed volume, *Verses*, of 1847, Dante drew, probably in the same year, a careful profile in pencil. It shows Christina with curls (so does No. 2) and with some thinness of contour. It is certainly like her, but not in the most attractive way.

6. In 1848 Dante painted an oil-head of Christina: it appears to be the first coloured work that he completed. It is a true likeness, and shows a face so well-moulded and agreeable as to be, in a fair sense, beautiful. This head is reproduced in the *Family Letters and Memoir* of my brother which I published in 1895; some defect in the surface of the pigment or the canvas interferes with the success of the reproduction.

7. About contemporary with this—for I know not which was the earlier—comes the pencil-head by Dante Gabriel, purchased by Mr. Sydney Morse soon after Christina's death. This also is a most truthful likeness, and a highly pleasing one—rather more matter-of-fact in expression than the preceding. It appears in Mr. Bell's book and elsewhere.

8. The little pencil-head by Dante Gabriel, published with Christina's tale *Maude* in 1897, seems also to appertain to 1848. It is a nice but slight sketch, with some archness of expression—a quality in which the poetess was by no means deficient. The original now belongs to Mr. Poulson Kernahan.

9. The head of Mary, in the oil-picture of *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin* painted by my brother in 1848-49, was studied from Christina, and is a real if not a literal portrait of her, allowing for changed colour in the hair. The picture (now belonging to Lady Jekyll) has been reproduced in various forms.

10. The profile in pencil, by my brother, which appears in the *New Poems*, 1896, and in the present volume, exquisitely sweet in contour and expression, may have been done in 1849; as I have said elsewhere, it has something of the air of a study preliminary to No. 13, but not in the same pose.

11. The small oil-portrait by James Collinson, given in Mr. Bell's book. This is a true likeness of Christina: a true but also an ordinary one, done

by an artist whose eye for beauty was not keen, and whose style was stinted. Its date is 1849. In 1901 it figured in the Great Exhibition in Glasgow.

12. Towards the same time my brother did a small pencil half-figure of Christina, in profile. It is not important, but defines her general look well enough.

13. The picture by Dante Rossetti, *Ecce Ancilla Domini* (or *The Annunciation*), in the National British Gallery, 1849-50. The head of the Virgin was studied from Christina; it was however altered from time to time, and more than one person sat for it. I consider that it presents some substantial resemblance to Christina, and that the expression of *her* face more than any other is realized in it; a portrait it is not, and does not affect to be. When first exhibited, 1850, the likeness was more decided than it is now.

14. As shown in the book of Dante Rossetti's *Family Letters*, he drew a reminiscent caricature of Christina in August 1852; she is presented as listening in rapt attention to some verses improvised by a friend. The chief point observable in this caricature is that it gives the 'chin rather [or a good deal] prolonged and pointed,' on which I have before remarked.

15. The engaging pencil-drawing by Dante Rossetti reproduced in Mr. Bell's book—Christina seated and reading—October 1852; this affords an extremely good idea of the composed, orderly look of Christina in day-by-day life; placidly self-withdrawn, as incapable of parade in mental gifts as in toilet—but not incapable of making those gifts apparent when the occasion arose.

16. My brother's pen-and-ink design *Hesterna Rosa* (the property of Mr. F. G. Stephens), represents, with a motto from Sir Henry Taylor's *Philip van Artevelde*, two women in a tent with their paramours, who are playing at dice. One of the women, struck with a pang of remorse at the thought of her lapse from virtue, shades her face with her hand. I think it clear that this face is drawn from Christina, whom it resembles well; it is not from Miss Siddal, and at that date there was no other female head that he habitually drew.

17. In June 1853, when my sister was settled in Frome with our parents, I did a pencil sketch of her, the face being in rather full shadow. It has no pretensions as a work of art, but is not deficient in resemblance. There is also, from my hand, a profile outline, which may be of about the same date, but I think rather later; it preserves something, not only of her features, but of the serene, yet by no means unemotional, sweetness of her look.

18. In and about 1855 a friend, Miss (Henrietta) Rintoul, daughter of the then editor of *The Spectator*, took up photography as a diversion, and she made some photographs of Christina, which seem to be the earliest sun-pictures ever taken of her. Two of these photographs remain. In

both Christina is seated in a little balcony abutting on the leads of the house; alone in one instance—in the other along with myself. Both of these are very good likenesses of my sister; unfortunately, they have faded to a great extent.

19. Two photographs on glass were taken of Christina, along with Maria, in April 1855—three-quarter lengths. They are nearly, but not quite, identical, and both give her face with an air of brightness and animation, and of earnestness as well.

20. A photograph on glass, showing Christina along with our mother and Maria. I think the date may be 1856. This is the only portrait of Christina in which the hair is arranged (as customary in those years) over the ears, and with a plait coming circlet-wise across the head. It is an excellent likeness, attesting, by the irrefutable evidence of the sun, that she was not very far from being beautiful. This photograph is reproduced in the volume *Gabriele Rossetti*.

21. 1857 was the date of the publication of Tennyson's *Poems*, illustrated by Millais, Dante Rossetti, and others. On p. 119 is Rossetti's design of King Arthur in Avalon, 'watched by weeping queens.' The first face here (from the spectator's left) is taken from Christina, but is less like her on the engraved page than in the original drawing; she must also have sat for the profile to the extreme right, which is a very faithful likeness. Millais's design (p. 274) of the young lady (*Locksley Hall*) caught in possession of a love-letter is also not unlike Christina; I will not say, however, that it was done from her, for I cannot remember that, nor do I think it quite probable.

22. Towards 1862, soon after the publication of *Goblin Market*, and some laudatory critiques consequent thereon, Dante Gabriel noticed in *The Times* the critical phrase, 'Miss Rossetti can point to work which could not easily be mended.' By a wilful perversion of its obvious meaning, he knocked off a caricature (pen-and-ink) in which Christina, in a highly 'rampageous' mood, was kicking and pounding away with a hammer at the household clock, glass, and crockery; some bank-notes are in the fire. The caricature amused Christina, who preserved it; since it came into my possession I gave it to Signora Agresti. This is not much more like the poetess in visage than in action, but one can see whom it is meant for.

23. Three carte-de-visite photographs, taken in 1863. These, again, are extremely good, rendering very well the subdued dignity and elegant (though not fashionable) quietude of her aspect. Two of the figures are standing—the third is seated, bonneted.

24. In the autumn of 1863 the Rev. Mr. Dodgson (of *Alice in Wonderland*) attended more than once in my brother's house, 16 Cheyne Walk, and took in the garden photographs of the members of the family

whom he found at hand. One (reproduced in Mr. Bell's book) represents my mother and Christina, half-figures; highly successful, and showing the contour of my sister's face to great advantage. There are also three family-groups, two of them comprising four figures, and the other five. The last is spoiled by splashes. In each of these Christina is capitally characterized; one is a standing figure, giving an intellectual profile, and one a seated figure, with a cheerful and somewhat bantering air.

25. In May 1865 my brother made a very careful pencil-profile of Christina, on a fairly large (not life-size) scale. It is in every respect a highly impressive drawing. It suffers from having been begun at first on too small a piece of paper; the penciling has got rubbed, more especially on the hair, and the joining of the added paper is disagreeably apparent. This formed a frontispiece for the volume compiled by me, *Præraphaelite Diaries and Letters*.

26. The best known of all the portraits of Christina is the drawing in coloured chalks, life-size, which Dante Rossetti executed in September 1866; it forms the frontispiece to Mr. Bell's book. This is a beautiful drawing, showing a face very chaste in outline, and distinguished in expression; it would be hard for any likeness to be more exact. I have seen it stated somewhere (and I believe *apropos* of this very drawing) that one cannot trust Rossetti's likenesses, as he always idealized. Few statements could be more untruthful. Certainly he aimed—and he succeeded—at bringing out the beauty and the fine expression of a face, rather than its more commonplace and superficial aspect; but his likenesses are, with casual exceptions, very strict transcripts of the fact. Any one who supposes, for instance, that Mrs. William Morris (whom my brother so constantly drew and painted from 1857 onwards) was not precisely like what he represented her, makes a very great mistake.

27. In the same year, 1866, Christina was a visitor at Penkill Castle, Ayrshire, the seat of Miss (Alice) Boyd. Mr. W. Bell Scott was there at the same time: and, in one of his mural paintings in the Castle, he represented her as a personage (? Minerva) in the Court of Venus, from the poem by James I. of Scotland, *The King's Quair*. I saw this painting many years ago, and I believe that the likeness of Christina is fairly characteristic. It has been reproduced by Scott in an etching and otherwise, but not so as to be recognizable.

28. At some date, which I suppose to be towards 1868, she sat for three photographs, all produced perhaps at one sitting. The best is a carte-de-visite, seated full-length, a profile, in which the face has a very thoughtful and expressive look. It is not a flattering likeness, but truly a valuable one. Another seated half-figure, much larger, has that rather set and blank air which comes over the face of a person expecting to be photographed. The third, only head and shoulders, is the reverse of attractive, but the resemblance is there.

29. It was in May 1877 that two photographs of Christina were taken by the skilled hands of Messrs. Elliott and Fry; these are the only photographs of her which seem to retain currency at the present day. It was no fault of Messrs. Elliott and Fry that neither portrait does her justice. They are both seated three-quarter figures, one of them in full face; this the sitter was accustomed to call 'the idiot,' and indeed it is sufficiently vacant-looking. The other is in profile, reading with lowered eyelids; it counts as the less unsatisfactory of the two. In both instances the eyeballs (from the cause to which I have already referred) are rather unpleasantly prominent.

30. The tinted-chalk head of Christina, along with our mother, now in the National Portrait Gallery, was drawn by Dante Rossetti at Hunter's Forestal, Herne Bay, as he was recovering from an illness in the autumn of 1877. This profile is markedly like a certain aspect of Christina's face which was not exactly unwonted, but still was exceptional; there is a rather inscrutable sphinx-like look about it. Whenever I set eyes upon it, the lines from her poem, *From House to Home*, come into my mind—

> Therefore in patience I possess my soul;
> Yea therefore as a flint I set my face.

31. Just about the same date my brother did two other tinted-chalk heads of Christina. In one the head is erect, full-face; in the other, three-quarters view, it is slightly drooped; in each of them she wears the cap which she had assumed before 1877, and which continued to the last to be her habitual wear. The latter drawing has been reproduced ere now; not, I think, the former, but it was shown in the Wolverhampton Art Exhibition of 1902. Both these are fine works of art, and speaking likenesses; the erect head partakes, in a minor degree, of the expression which I have noted under No. 30. Anything more close than the drooped head to the features and the sentiment of my sister's face in her advanced years (she was aged forty-six at the time) cannot well be imagined.

I fully think that after this date Christina never sat for her likeness, whether to the sun or to an artist. It is a pity, for seventeen further years elapsed before her death; and there were periods when her face certainly told to better advantage than in the photographs No. 29. I have had in my hands three or four other slight sketches of her by my brother, which I have given away here and there—all of them belonging to the days of her youth or early maturity. Two of them are in the Public Library of Des Moines, in the State of Iowa (United States).

I have thus specified, under 31 numbers, 45 portraits of Christina Rossetti, from the age of six years to that of forty-six. Those which I have numbered 6, 7, 10, 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 31, would afford to any one who sees them a very exact knowledge of what she was like from the age of

seventeen onwards ; and most of the others supplement them to some good purpose.

As yet I have said very little as to my sister's character, except that she was religious and affectionate in an eminent degree. It is time to proceed to some further detail.

In innate character she was vivacious, and open to pleasurable impressions ; and, during her girlhood, one might readily have supposed that she would develop into a woman of expansive heart, fond of society and diversions, and taking a part in them of more than average brilliancy. What came to pass was of course quite the contrary. In this result ill-health and an early blight to the affections told for much ; for much also an exceeding sensitiveness of conscience, acted upon by the strictest conceptions in religion. Of society (as one uses that term to mean fashionable or quasi-fashionable society) she saw nothing ; of amusements practically nothing. She was, I suppose, barely eighteen when she determined never again to enter a theatre, dramatic or operatic ; not perhaps that she considered plays and operas to be in themselves iniquitous, but rather that the moral tone of vocalists, actors, and actresses, is understood to be lax, and it behoves a Christian not to contribute to the encouragement of lax moralists. In all such matters Christina was an Anglo-Catholic, and, among Anglo-Catholics, a Puritan ; and yet she looked without hardness of heart upon any individual who might have lapsed from virtue. As well as theatres, she gave up at an early age the game of chess, of which she was rather fond, and this simply because she thought it made her too eager for a win. Cards however she never relinquished, finding no sort of harm in them ; and, up to the death of our mother, or probably even later, she would take a hand at whist, cribbage, or bézique, playing for no stakes whatever.

She had a very strong sense of duty and the most rigid regard for truth, in which indeed she resembled all the members of her maternal stock. That she was affectionate in her family I have already said, and she had, besides, a rather unusual feeling of deference for 'the head of the family,' whoever he might be — my father, Dante Gabriel, and finally myself. This might be accounted rather Italian than English. With several people she was extremely friendly, and no one felt more strongly than she the Christian obligation of being at charity with all men. This she found in the long-run a pleasant duty ; but it had not been exactly in her nature from the first, as she was certainly born with a marked antipathy to anything which savoured of vulgarity or 'bumptiousness,' and with an instinctive disposition to 'hold her head high,' though not to assert herself in express terms. In Christina's character there was great dignity tempered — or rather indeed reinforced — by modesty ; and to this her bearing corresponded faithfully. I have already referred to her having been, and this from an early age, rather punctiliously polite ; and it may be that some persons who knew her

intellectual and literary standing in the eye of the world fancied that there was something of affectation or even of sarcasm in this, which, however, was not so. Her speech was often sprightly, or to some extent witty, as well as still oftener simple, earnest, and grave—never abstract or argumentative. She was replete with the spirit of self-postponement, which passed into self-sacrifice whenever that quality was in demand. Such a spirit is, in fact, the spirit of chivalry, and *noblesse oblige* might have been her motto. Though shy, and even somewhat nervous, she was of unshaken firmness, making up her mind pretty easily in any crisis of her life, and abiding immovable. The narrow path was the only one for her, and a lion in the same path made no difference. With firmness, she knew fortitude also. A small point she was the first to concede; but, as soon as a jot of duty seemed involved in it, tenacity was in the very essence of her being. A marked trait in her character was gratitude, a quality which she inherited from both her parents. For the slightest attention or service she felt obliged; and for anything of a serious kind, deeply and permanently indebted. Although naturally of a rather indolent turn, disinclined to stick to an occupation, and often better pleased to be doing nothing than anything, she acquired habits of much assiduity, and neglected no household or other requirement which she perceived to have a claim upon her; and she was at once frugal and liberal. On self-indulgent luxuries, whether of the table or the toilet or aught else, she spent practically nothing at any period of life.

No precept of the Christian religion was more indelibly impressed upon her mind and her sympathies than 'Judge not, that ye be not judged.' She never—not even in thought, so far as thought was under her control—imputed a bad motive to any one; and to hear her talking scandal, or indulging in ill-natured gossip, would have been equally impossible as to see her putting on a pair of knickerbockers, or (as in Dante Gabriel's caricature afore-mentioned) smashing the furniture. None the less she had a large fund of discernment, and speedily fathomed defects in her acquaintances which she never announced. Another text which she constantly bore in mind is that one is not to do 'anything whereby thy brother stumbleth or is offended or is made weak.' I have often thought that this trammelled her to some extent in writing, for she was wont to construe the biblical precepts in a very literal manner; and that she would in some instances have expressed herself with more latitude of thought and word, and to a more valuable effect, but for the fear of saying something which would somehow turn to the detriment of some timorous or dim-minded reader. She certainly felt that to write anything for publication is to incur a great spiritual responsibility.

This introduces us to what I regard as the one serious flaw in a beautiful and admirable character—she was by far over-scrupulous. Scrupulosity may be a virtue: over-scrupulosity is at any rate a semi-virtue, but

it has, to my thinking, the full practical bearings of a defect. It is more befitting for a nunnery than for London streets. It weakens the mind, straitens the temperament and character, chills the impulse and the influence. Over-scrupulosity made Christina Rossetti shut up her mind to almost all things save the Bible, and the admonitions and ministrations of priests. To ponder for herself whether a thing was true or not ceased to be a part of her intellect. The only question was whether or not it conformed to the Bible, as viewed by Anglo-Catholicism. Her temperament and character, naturally warm and free, became 'a fountain sealed.' Not but that affection continued to flow in abundant measure, and the clear line of duty told out all the more apparent from receiving no side-lights. Impulse and *élan* were checked, both in act and in writing, but the most extreme spontaneity in poetic performance always remained. The influence of her work became intense for devout minds of a certain type, and for lovers of poetry in its pure essence; but for a great mass of readers, who might otherwise have been attracted and secured, the material proffered was too uniform and too restricted, and was too seldom concerned with breathing and diurnal actualities—never with rising currents of thought.

I must however guard myself here against being supposed to say, what a great number of critics and readers or half-readers have said before me, that Christina's poetry is 'morbid.' Morbid things are to be found in it—where are they not to be found? and the fact that her feelings and perceptions were coloured by an infirm physical condition has been already stated, and was inevitable. But I cannot acknowledge that, for a person who entertained the belief which Christina really and deeply did entertain the professed belief of all Christians—there is anything morbid in saying that this present life is far from satisfactory, that death is the avenue to a different life, which will be of eternal duration and may be made of ineffable bliss, and that therefore death is a transition to be rather wished for than shunned. No one would regard as morbid a person who, during this mundane life, should elect to pass from a condition of serious distress into one of extreme and lasting happiness, at the cost of a few minutes of physical pain; and this is a contrast infinitely smaller than that between life on earth and the promised life in heaven. As Christina's faith in these things was of iron solidity, so was her attitude of mind, consequent upon her faith, logical and sound; and to speak of morbidity in relation to it seems a decided misapplication of the term. It is open to any of us not to believe in her premisses, and thus to dissent from her conclusion, but the real morbidity would be to reject her conclusion while we admit her premisses.

I have said elsewhere, but may as well repeat it here, that her habits of composition were entirely of the casual and spontaneous kind, from her earliest to her latest years. If something came into her head which she found suggestive of verse, she put it into verse. It came to her (I take it)

very easily, without her meditating a possible subject, and without her making any great difference in the first from the latest form of the verses which embodied it; but *some* difference, with a view to right and fine detail of execution, she did of course make when needful. If the thing did not present itself before her, as something craving a vesture of verse at her hands, she did not write at all. What she wrote was pretty well known in the family as soon as her impeccably neat manuscript of it appeared in one of her little notebooks; but she did not show it about as an achievement, and still less had she, in the course of her work, invited any hint, counsel, or co-operation.

It may be asked—Did Christina Rossetti consider herself truly a poetess, and a good one? Truly a poetess, most decidedly yes; and, within the range of her subject and thought, and the limits of her executive endeavour, a good one. This did not make her in the least conceited or arrogant as regards herself, nor captious as to the work of others; but it did render her very resolute in setting a line of demarcation between a person who is a poet and another person who is a versifier. Pleadings *in misericordiam* were of no use with her, and she never could see any good reason why one who is not a poet should write in metre.

Christina was well versed in Italian and French; of German she knew some moderate amount; of Latin a mere smattering; Greek not at all. At no period of her life was she a great devourer of books, but the number of them which she had read in the course of her sixty-four years was necessarily considerable. Of science and philosophy she knew nothing, and to history she had no marked inclination; much more bias towards biography. Theology she studied, I think, very little indeed: there was the Bible, of which her knowledge was truly minute and ready, supplemented by the *Confessions* of Augustine and the *Imitation of Christ*. She also knew and liked *Pilgrim's Progress*. I question whether, apart from this one book of Augustine, she ever read any 'Father,' Latin or Greek, or desired to read him. To novel-reading she had no narrow-minded objection. Scott she certainly liked, and in early youth Dickens and Bulwer: Thackeray may have appeared to her too worldly and 'knowing,' but she understood his merits. She never, I think, looked into a book which was known or reputed to be 'improper,' and her acquaintance with French novels must have been extremely limited. Any such author as Rabelais would have been beyond measure repulsive to her—indeed, heartily despised as well as loathed; and Boccaccio, wherever he assimilates to a Rabelaisian side of things, would have shared the same fate. But it is certain to me that she never opened the pages of either. In poetry she was (need I say it?) capable of appreciating whatever is really good; and yet her affections, if not her perceptions, in poetry, were severely restricted. The one poet whom she really gloried in was Dante: next to him perhaps Homer, so far as she could estimate him in one or two English translations.

Tasso entranced her in girlhood, and perhaps retained a firm hold on her afterwards. Among very great authors, none (making allowance for Dante) seemed to appeal to her more than Plato: she read his *Dialogues* over and over again, with ever renewed or augmented zest. For Shakespear her intellectual reverence was of course very deep, but how far she delighted in him may be a different question. In tragedy, in feeling, in insight, in splendour of poetic expression, she must have known him supreme; but all the comic or 'Worldly Wiseman' side of Shakespear—except some bits of simple 'fun,' such as Dogberry and Verges—was certain to be distasteful to her. Humour, in its inner essence, she could enter into; but for any rollicking or cynical or unctuous aspect of humour she had no sort of relish. Sir Toby Belch and Falconbridge would simply repel her, and even Falstaff would find little indulgence and elicit only watery smiles. I say all this not as embodying any express remarks of hers, but because I understand her general habit of mind. Another great thing which she disliked was Milton's *Paradise Lost:* the only poems of his which she seems to me to have seriously loved were the sonnets. Among modern English poets, I should say that Shelley, or perhaps Coleridge, stood highest in her esteem; certainly not Wordsworth, whom she read scantily. As to Shelley, she can have known little beyond his lyrics; most of the long poems, as being 'impious,' remained unscanned. Tennyson she heartily enjoyed and admired, and Mrs. Browning; and Browning she honoured, without eager sympathy. The poems of William Morris were mostly unread by her—not unvalued. Of Swinburne she knew *Atalanta in Calydon*, and some few other things, including (I suppose) *Erechtheus;* and she regarded *Atalanta* as—what it is—a stupendous masterpiece. For one work by a poetess junior to herself she entertained an exceptional admiration—the tragic drama, *The Sentence* (relating to Caligula), by Augusta Webster. It would be possible to extend these remarks much, but here I may pause.

Christina had no politics; unless it be the rule 'Honesty is the best policy,' acting upon a constitution of mind much more conservative than inclined to change. In childhood she had, of course, through the influence and associations of her father, been nurtured in an atmosphere of bold political advance, tending to the revolutionary: this may have lingered with her as a kind of antidotal savour against conservatism, but hardly as a practical counterbalance. I do not think, however, that she ever viewed an Austrian—the bugbear of our early Italian environments—as quite on the same footing as men of other races. The two nations that she really liked, apart from those of the United Kingdom, were the Italians and the French. At the time of the great American war of secession, she was (like myself) a steady adversary of the slave-holders. As in politics, so in the fine arts of form—painting and sculpture—she had little fundamental opinion of her own, and no connoisseurship. She naturally adhered to what was high and noble in the arts, and would not have supposed that

something inane and bad was good; but she neither possessed nor affected anything approaching to critical judgment in these matters. To music she was not insensitive; but she was ignorant, and it formed no part of her concern.

As to Christina Rossetti's poetry, I feel that it is my part rather to keep silence than to speak, especially when, as in the present instance, her poems are presented to the public, to be judged of as the public wills. I will however say thus much—that, fully conscious as I am of their limitations, I consider that on some grounds it is hardly possible to over-praise them. Her prose writings partake of the same qualities to a certain extent—of course a minor extent.

As I have given in my Preface a list of the volumes which have hitherto constituted her poems, I think it as well to add here a list of the prose volumes; and with that I terminate my summary account of a soul as pure, luteous, concentrated, loving, and devoted, as ever uttered itself in either prose or verse.

WILLIAM M. ROSSETTI.

LIST OF PROSE WORKS

1. Commonplace, and other Short Stories, 1870.
2. Annus Domini, a Prayer for each Day of the Year, 1874.
3. Speaking Likenesses, 1874.
4. Seek and Find, 1879.
5. Called to be Saints, 1881.
6. Letter and Spirit, 1883.
7. Time Flies, 1885.
8. The Face of the Deep, a Devotional Commentary on the Apocalypse, 1892.
9. Maude, 1897.

DEDICATORY SONNET

SONNETS are full of love, and this my tome
Has many sonnets: so here now shall be
One sonnet more, a love sonnet, from me
To her whose heart is my heart's quiet home,
To my first Love, my Mother, on whose knee
I learnt love-lore that is not troublesome;
Whose service is my special dignity,
And she my lodestar while I go and come.
And so because you love me, and because
I love you, Mother, I have woven a wreath
Of rhymes wherewith to crown your honoured name
In you not fourscore years can dim the flame
Of love, whose blessed glow transcends the laws
Of time and change and mortal life and death.

April 1880.

THE LONGER POEMS

GOBLIN MARKET

MORNING and evening
Maids heard the goblins cry:
"Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy:
Apples and quinces,
Lemons and oranges,
Plump unpecked cherries,
Melons and raspberries,
Bloom-down-cheeked peaches,
Swart-headed mulberries,
Wild free-born cranberries,
Crab-apples, dewberries,
Pine-apples, blackberries,
Apricots, strawberries;—
All ripe together
In summer weather,—
Morns that pass by,
Fair eves that fly;
Come buy, come buy:
Our grapes fresh from the vine,
Pomegranates full and fine,
Dates and sharp bullaces,
Rare pears and greengages,
Damsons and bilberries,
Taste them and try:
Currants and gooseberries,
Bright-fire-like barberries,
Figs to fill your mouth,
Citrons from the South,
Sweet to tongue and sound to eye;
Come buy, come buy."

Evening by evening
Among the brookside rushes,
Laura bowed her head to hear,
Lizzie veiled her blushes:
Crouching close together
In the cooling weather,
With clasping arms and cautioning lips,
With tingling cheeks and finger tips.
"Lie close," Laura said,
Pricking up her golden head:
"We must not look at goblin men,
We must not buy their fruits:
Who knows upon what soil they fed
Their hungry thirsty roots?"
"Come buy," call the goblins
Hobbling down the glen.
"Oh," cried Lizzie, "Laura, Laura,
You should not peep at goblin men."
Lizzie covered up her eyes,
Covered close lest they should look;
Laura reared her glossy head,
And whispered like the restless brook:
"Look, Lizzie, look, Lizzie,
Down the glen tramp little men.
One hauls a basket,
One bears a plate,
One lugs a golden dish
Of many pounds' weight.
How fair the vine must grow
Whose grapes are so luscious;
How warm the wind must blow
Through those fruit bushes."

'No,' said Lizzie: 'No, no, no;
Their offers should not charm us,
Their evil gifts would harm us.'
She thrust a dimpled finger
In each ear, shut eyes and ran:
Curious Laura chose to linger
Wondering at each merchant man.
One had a cat's face,
One whisked a tail,
One tramped at a rat's pace,
One crawled like a snail,
One like a wombat prowled obtuse and furry,
One like a ratel tumbled hurry skurry.
She heard a voice like voice of doves
Cooing all together:
They sounded kind and full of loves
In the pleasant weather.

Laura stretched her gleaming neck
Like a rush-imbedded swan,
Like a lily from the beck,
Like a moonlit poplar branch,
Like a vessel at the launch
When its last restraint is gone.

Backwards up the mossy glen
Turned and trooped the goblin men,
With their shrill repeated cry,
'Come buy, come buy.'
When they reached where Laura was
They stood stock still upon the moss,
Leering at each other,
Brother with queer brother;
Signalling each other,
Brother with sly brother.
One set his basket down,
One reared his plate;
One began to weave a crown
Of tendrils, leaves, and rough nuts brown
(Men sell not such in any town);
One heaved the golden weight
Of dish and fruit to offer her:
'Come buy, come buy,' was still their cry.
Laura stared but did not stir,
Longed but had no money.
The whisk-tailed merchant bade her taste
In tones as smooth as honey,
The cat-faced purr'd,
The rat-paced spoke a word
Of welcome, and the snail-paced even was heard;
One parrot-voiced and jolly
Cried 'Pretty Goblin' still for 'Pretty Polly';
One whistled like a bird.

But sweet-tooth Laura spoke in haste:
'Good Folk, I have no coin;
To take were to purloin:
I have no copper in my purse,
I have no silver either,
And all my gold is on the furze
That shakes in windy weather
Above the rusty heather.'
'You have much gold upon your head,'
They answered all together:
'Buy from us with a golden curl.'
She clipped a precious golden lock,
She dropped a tear more rare than pearl,
Then sucked their fruit globes fair or red.
Sweeter than honey from the rock,
Stronger than man-rejoicing wine,
Clearer than water flowed that juice;
She never tasted such before,
How should it cloy with length of use?
She sucked and sucked and sucked the more
Fruits which that unknown orchard bore;

he sucked until her lips were sore ;
hen flung the emptied rinds away
ut gathered up one kernel stone,
nd knew not was it night or day
s she turned home alone.

izzie met her at the gate
ull of wise upbraidings :
Dear, you should not stay so late,
wilight is not good for maidens ;
hould not loiter in the glen
n the haunts of goblin men.
o you not remember Jeanie,
ow she met them in the moonlight,
ook their gifts both choice and many,
te their fruits and wore their flowers
lucked from bowers
here summer ripens at all hours ?
ut ever in the noonlight
he pined and pined away ;
ought them by night and day,
ound them no more, but dwindled and grew grey ;
hen fell with the first snow,
hile to this day no grass will grow
here she lies low :
planted daisies there a year ago
hat never blow.
ou should not loiter so.'
Nay, hush,' said Laura :
Nay, hush, my sister :
ate and ate my fill,
et my mouth waters still :
o-morrow night I will
uy more ;' and kissed her.
Have done with sorrow ;
ll bring you plums to-morrow
resh on their mother twigs,
herries worth getting ;
ou cannot think what figs
y teeth have met in,
hat melons icy-cold

Piled on a dish of gold
Too huge for me to hold,
What peaches with a velvet nap,
Pellucid grapes without one seed :
Odorous indeed must be the mead
Whereon they grow, and pure the wave they drink
With lilies at the brink,
And sugar-sweet their sap.'

Golden head by golden head,
Like two pigeons in one nest
Folded in each other's wings,
They lay down in their curtained bed :
Like two blossoms on one stem,
Like two flakes of new-fall'n snow,
Like two wands of ivory
Tipped with gold for awful kings.
Moon and stars gazed in at them,
Wind sang to them lullaby,
Lumbering owls forebore to fly,
Not a bat flapped to and fro
Round their nest :
Cheek to cheek and breast to breast
Locked together in one nest.

Early in the morning
When the first cock crowed his warning,
Neat like bees, as sweet and busy,
Laura rose with Lizzie :
Fetched in honey, milked the cows,
Aired and set to rights the house,
Kneaded cakes of whitest wheat,
Cakes for dainty mouths to eat,
Next churned butter, whipped up cream,
Fed their poultry, sat and sewed ;
Talked as modest maidens should :
Lizzie with an open heart,
Laura in an absent dream,
One content, one sick in part ;

One warbling for the mere bright
day's delight,
One longing for the night.

At length slow evening came:
They went with pitchers to the
reedy brook;
Lizzie most placid in her look,
Laura most like a leaping flame.
They drew the gurgling water from
its deep.
Lizzie plucked purple and rich
golden flags,
Then turning homeward said: 'The
sunset flushes
Those furthest loftiest crags;
Come, Laura, not another maiden
lags.
No wilful squirrel wags,
The beasts and birds are fast asleep.'
But Laura loitered still among the
rushes,
And said the bank was steep.

And said the hour was early still,
The dew not fall'n, the wind not
chill;
Listening ever, but not catching
The customary cry,
'Come buy, come buy,'
With its iterated jingle
Of sugar-baited words:
Not for all her watching
Once discerning even one goblin
Racing, whisking, tumbling, hob-
bling—
Let alone the herds
That used to tramp along the glen,
In groups or single,
Of brisk fruit-merchant men.

Till Lizzie urged, 'O Laura, come;
I hear the fruit-call, but I dare not
look:
You should not loiter longer at this
brook:
Come with me home.
The stars rise, the moon bends her
arc,
Each glow-worm winks her spark,
Let us get home before the night
grows dark:
For clouds may gather
Though this is summer weather,
Put out the lights and drench us
through;
Then if we lost our way what should
we do?'

Laura turned cold as stone
To find her sister heard that cry
alone,
That goblin cry,
'Come buy our fruits, come buy.'
Must she then buy no more such
dainty fruit?
Must she no more such succous
pasture find,
Gone deaf and blind?
Her tree of life drooped from the
root:
She said not one word in her heart's
sore ache:
But peering thro' the dimness,
nought discerning,
Trudged home, her pitcher dripping
all the way;
So crept to bed, and lay
Silent till Lizzie slept;
Then sat up in a passionate yearning,
And gnashed her teeth for baulked
desire, and wept
As if her heart would break.

Day after day, night after night,
Laura kept watch in vain
In sullen silence of exceeding pain.

e never caught again the goblin cry,
ome buy, come buy ;'—
e never spied the goblin men
awking their fruits along the glen :
ut when the noon waxed bright
er hair grew thin and grey ;
e dwindled, as the fair full moon doth turn
o swift decay and burn
er fire away.

ne day remembering her kernel-stone
e set it by a wall that faced the south ;
ewed it with tears, hoped for a root,
atched for a waxing shoot,
ut there came none.
never saw the sun,
never felt the trickling moisture run :
hile with sunk eyes and faded mouth
e dreamed of melons, as a traveller sees
lse waves in desert drouth
ith shade of leaf-crowned trees,
nd burns the thirstier in the sand-ful breeze.

e no more swept the house,
ended the fowls or cows,
tched honey, kneaded cakes of wheat,
ought water from the brook :
ut sat down listless in the chimney-nook
nd would not eat.

nder Lizzie could not bear
o watch her sister's cankerous care,
et not to share.

She night and morning
Caught the goblins' cry :
'Come buy our orchard fruits,
Come buy, come buy :'—
Beside the brook, along the glen,
She heard the tramp of goblin men,
The voice and stir
Poor Laura could not hear ;
Longed to buy fruit to comfort her,
But feared to pay too dear.
She thought of Jeanie in her grave,
Who should have been a bride ;
But who for joys brides hope to have
Fell sick and died
In her gay prime,
In earliest winter time,
With the first glazing rime,
With the first snow-fall of crisp winter time.

Till Laura dwindling
Seemed knocking at Death's door.
Then Lizzie weighed no more
Better and worse ;
But put a silver penny in her purse,
Kissed Laura, crossed the heath with clumps of furze
At twilight, halted by the brook :
And for the first time in her life
Began to listen and look.

Laughed every goblin
When they spied her peeping :
Came towards her hobbling,
Flying, running, leaping,
Puffing and blowing,
Chuckling, clapping, crowing,
Clucking and gobbling,
Mopping and mowing,
Full of airs and graces,
Pulling wry faces,
Demure grimaces,
Cat-like and rat-like,
Ratel- and wombat-like,

Snail-paced in a hurry,
Parrot-voiced and whistler,
Helter skelter, hurry skurry,
Chattering like magpies,
Fluttering like pigeons,
Gliding like fishes,—
Hugged her and kissed her:
Squeezed and caressed her:
Stretched up their dishes,
Panniers, and plates:
'Look at our apples
Russet and dun,
Bob at our cherries,
Bite at our peaches,
Citrons and dates,
Grapes for the asking,
Pears red with basking
Out in the sun,
Plums on their twigs;
Pluck them and suck them,—
Pomegranates, figs.'

'Good folk,' said Lizzie,
Mindful of Jeanie:
'Give me much and many:'
Held out her apron,
Tossed them her penny.
'Nay, take a seat with us,
Honour and eat with us,'
They answered grinning:
'Our feast is but beginning.
Night yet is early,
Warm and dew-pearly,
Wakeful and starry:
Such fruits as these
No man can carry;
Half their bloom would fly,
Half their dew would dry,
Half their flavour would pass by.
Sit down and feast with us,
Be welcome guest with us,
Cheer you and rest with us.'—
'Thank you,' said Lizzie: 'But one waits
At home alone for me:
So without further parleying,
If you will not sell me any
Of your fruits though much and many,
Give me back my silver penny
I tossed you for a fee.'—
They began to scratch their pates,
No longer wagging, purring,
But visibly demurring,
Grunting and snarling.
One called her proud,
Cross-grained, uncivil;
Their tones waxed loud,
Their looks were evil.
Lashing their tails
They trod and hustled her,
Elbowed and jostled her,
Clawed with their nails,
Barking, mewing, hissing, mocking,
Tore her gown and soiled her stocking,
Twitched her hair out by the roots,
Stamped upon her tender feet,
Held her hands and squeezed their fruits
Against her mouth to make her eat.

White and golden Lizzie stood,
Like a lily in a flood,—
Like a rock of blue-veined stone
Lashed by tides obstreperously,—
Like a beacon left alone
In a hoary roaring sea,
Sending up a golden fire,—
Like a fruit-crowned orange-tree
White with blossoms honey-sweet
Sore beset by wasp and bee,—
Like a royal virgin town
Topped with gilded dome and spire
Close beleaguered by a fleet
Mad to tug her standard down.

One may lead a horse to water,
Twenty cannot make him drink.

Though the goblins cuffed and caught her,
Coaxed and fought her,
Bullied and besought her,
Scratched her, pinched her black as ink,
Kicked and knocked her,
Mauled and mocked her,
Lizzie uttered not a word;
Would not open lip from lip
Lest they should cram a mouthful in:
But laughed in heart to feel the drip
Of juice that syruped all her face,
And lodged in dimples of her chin,
And streaked her neck which quaked like curd.
At last the evil people,
Worn out by her resistance,
Flung back her penny, kicked their fruit
Along whichever road they took,
Not leaving root or stone or shoot;
Some writhed into the ground,
Some dived into the brook
With ring and ripple,
Some scudded on the gale without a sound,
Some vanished in the distance.

In a smart, ache, tingle,
Lizzie went her way;
Knew not was it night or day;
Sprang up the bank, tore thro' the furze,
Threaded copse and dingle,
And heard her penny jingle
Bouncing in her purse,—
Its bounce was music to her ear.
She ran and ran
As if she feared some goblin man
Dogged her with gibe or curse
Or something worse:
But not one goblin skurried after,
Nor was she pricked by fear;
The kind heart made her windy-paced
That urged her home quite out of breath with haste
And inward laughter.

She cried, 'Laura,' up the garden,
'Did you miss me?
Come and kiss me.
Never mind my bruises,
Hug me, kiss me, suck my juices
Squeezed from goblin fruits for you,
Goblin pulp and goblin dew.
Eat me, drink me, love me;
Laura, make much of me;
For your sake I have braved the glen
And had to do with goblin merchant men.'

Laura started from her chair,
Flung her arms up in the air,
Clutched her hair:
'Lizzie, Lizzie, have you tasted
For my sake the fruit forbidden?
Must your light like mine be hidden,
Your young life like mine be wasted,
Undone in mine undoing,
And ruined in my ruin,
Thirsty, cankered, goblin-ridden?'—
She clung about her sister,
Kissed and kissed and kissed her:
Tears once again
Refreshed her shrunken eyes,
Dropping like rain
After long sultry drouth;
Shaking with aguish fear, and pain,
She kissed and kissed her with a hungry mouth.

Her lips began to scorch,
That juice was wormwood to her tongue,
She loathed the feast:
Writhing as one possessed she leaped and sung,
Rent all her robe, and wrung

Her hands in lamentable haste,
And beat her breast.
Her locks streamed like the torch
Borne by a racer at full speed,
Or like the mane of horses in their flight,
Or like an eagle when she stems the light
Straight toward the sun,
Or like a caged thing freed,
Or like a flying flag when armies run.

Swift fire spread through her veins, knocked at her heart,
Met the fire smouldering there
And overbore its lesser flame;
She gorged on bitterness without a name:
Ah fool, to choose such part
Of soul-consuming care!
Sense failed in the mortal strife:
Like the watch-tower of a town
Which an earthquake shatters down,
Like a lightning-stricken mast,
Like a wind-uprooted tree
Spun about,
Like a foam-topped waterspout
Cast down headlong in the sea,
She fell at last;
Pleasure past and anguish past,
Is it death or is it life?

Life out of death.
That night long Lizzie watched by her,
Counted her pulse's flagging stir,
Felt for her breath,
Held water to her lips, and cooled her face
With tears and fanning leaves.
But when the first birds chirped about their eaves,
And early reapers plodded to the place
Of golden sheaves,
And dew-wet grass
Bowed in the morning winds so brisk to pass,
And new buds with new day
Opened of cup-like lilies on the stream,
Laura awoke as from a dream,
Laughed in the innocent old way,
Hugged Lizzie but not twice or thrice;
Her gleaming locks showed not one thread of grey,
Her breath was sweet as May,
And light danced in her eyes.

Days, weeks, months, years
Afterwards, when both were wives
With children of their own;
Their mother-hearts beset with fears,
Their lives bound up in tender lives;
Laura would call the little ones
And tell them of her early prime,
Those pleasant days long gone
Of not-returning time:
Would talk about the haunted glen,
The wicked quaint fruit-merchant men,
Their fruits like honey to the throat
But poison in the blood
(Men sell not such in any town):
Would tell them how her sister stood
In deadly peril to do her good,
And win the fiery antidote:
Then joining hands to little hands
Would bid them cling together,—
'For there is no friend like a sister
In calm or stormy weather;
To cheer one on the tedious way,
To fetch one if one goes astray,
To lift one if one totters down,
To strengthen whilst one stands.'

27 April 1859.

REPINING

SHE sat alway through the long day
Spinning the weary thread away ;
And ever said in undertone,
'Come, that I be no more alone.'

From early dawn to set of sun
Working, her task was still undone ;
And the long thread seemed to increase
Even while she spun and did not cease.
She heard the gentle turtle-dove
Tell to its mate a tale of love ;
She saw the glancing swallows fly,
Ever a social company ;
She knew each bird upon its nest
Had cheering songs to bring it rest ;
None lived alone save only she :—
The wheel went round more wearily ;
She wept and said in undertone,
'Come, that I be no more alone.'

Day followed day and still she sighed
For love, and was not satisfied ;
Until one night, when the moonlight
Turned all the trees to silver-white,
She heard, what ne'er she heard before,
A steady hand undo the door.
The nightingale since set of sun
Her throbbing music had not done,
And she had listened silently ;
But now the wind had changed, and she
Heard the sweet song no more, but heard
Beside her bed a whispered word :
'Damsel, rise up ; be not afraid ;
For I am come at last,' it said.

She trembled, though the voice was mild ;
She trembled like a frightened child ;—
Till she looked up, and then she saw
The unknown speaker without awe.
He seemed a fair young man, his eyes
Beaming with serious charities ;
His cheek was white but hardly pale ;
And a dim glory like a veil
Hovered about his head, and shone
Through the whole room till night was gone.

So her fear fled ; and then she said,
Leaning upon her quiet bed :
'Now thou art come, I prythee stay,
That I may see thee in the day,
And learn to know thy voice, and hear
It evermore calling me near.'

He answered, 'Rise and follow me.
But she looked upwards wonderingly :
'And whither wouldst thou go, friend ? stay
Until the dawning of the day.'
But he said : 'The wind ceaseth, Maid ;
Of chill nor damp be thou afraid.'

She bound her hair up from the floor,
And passed in silence from the door.

So they went forth together, he
Helping her forward tenderly.
The hedges bowed beneath his hand ;
Forth from the streams came the dry land
As they passed over ; evermore
The pallid moonbeams shone before ;
And the wind hushed, and nothing stirred ;

Not even a solitary bird,
Scared by their footsteps, fluttered by
Where aspen-trees stood steadily.

As they went on, at length a sound
Came trembling on the air around;
The undistinguishable hum
Of life, voices that go and come
Of busy men, and the child's sweet
High laugh, and noise of trampling
feet.

Then he said, 'Wilt thou go and
see?'
And she made answer joyfully:
'The noise of life, of human life,
Of dear communion without strife,
Of converse held 'twixt friend and
friend;
Is it not here our path shall end?'
He led her on a little way
Until they reached a hillock: 'Stay.'

It was a village in a plain.
High mountains screened it from the
rain
And stormy wind; and nigh at hand
A bubbling streamlet flowed o'er
sand
Pebbly and fine, and sent life up
Green succous stalk and flower-cup.

Gradually, day's harbinger,
A chilly wind began to stir.
It seemed a gentle powerless breeze
That scarcely rustled through the
trees;
And yet it touched the mountain's
head
And the paths man might never
tread.
But hearken: in the quiet weather
Do all the streams flow down to-
gether?—
No, 'tis a sound more terrible
Than though a thousand rivers fell.
The everlasting ice and snow
Were loosened then, but not to flow;—
With a loud crash like solid thunder
The avalanche came, burying under
The village; turning life and breath
And rest and joy and plans to
death.

'Oh let us fly, for pity fly!
Let us go hence, friend, thou and I.
There must be many regions yet
Where these things make not
desolate.'

He looked upon her seriously;
Then said: 'Arise and follow me.'
The path that lay before them was
Nigh covered over with long grass;
And many slimy things and slow
Trailed on between the roots below.
The moon looked dimmer than
before;
And shadowy cloudlets floating o'er
Its face sometimes quite hid its light,
And filled the skies with deeper night.

At last, as they went on, the noise
Was heard of the sea's mighty voice;
And soon the ocean could be seen
In its long restlessness serene.
Upon its breast a vessel rode
That drowsily appeared to nod
As the great billows rose and fell,
And swelled to sink, and sank to
swell.

Meanwhile the strong wind had
come forth
From the chill regions of the North,
The mighty wind invisible.
And the low waves began to swell;
And the sky darkened overhead;

nd the moon once looked forth, then fled
ehind dark clouds ; while here and there
he lightning shone out in the air,
nd the approaching thunder rolled
/ith angry pealings manifold.
ow many vows were made, and prayers
hat in safe times were cold and scarce !
ill all availed not ; and at length
he waves arose in all their strength,
nd fought against the ship, and filled
he ship. Then were the clouds unsealed,
nd the rain hurried forth, and beat
n every side and over it.

ome clung together, and some kept
long stèrn silence, and some wept.
any half crazed looked on in wonder
s the strong timbers rent asunder ;
riends forgot friends, foes fled to foes ;—
nd still the water rose and rose.

Ah woe is me ! Whom I have seen
re now as though they had not been.
n the earth there is room for birth,
nd there are graves enough in earth ;
/hy should the cold sea, tempest-torn,
ury those whom it hath not borne?'

e answered not, and they went on.
he glory of the heavens was gone ;
he moon gleamed not nor any star ;
old winds were rustling near and far,
nd from the trees the dry leaves fell
/ith a sad sound unspeakable.

The air was cold ; till from the South
A gust blew hot, like sudden drouth,
Into their faces ; and a light,
Glowing and red, shone through the night.

A mighty city full of flame
And death and sounds without a name.
Amid the black and blinding smoke,
The people, as one man, awoke.
Oh happy they who yesterday
On the long journey went away !
Whose pallid lips, smiling and chill,
While the flames scorch them smile on still ;
Who murmur not, who tremble not
When the bier crackles fiery hot ;
Who dying said in love's increase,
' Lord, let thy servant part in peace.'

Those in the town could see and hear
A shaded river flowing near ;
The broad deep bed could hardly hold
Its plenteous waters calm and cold.
Was flame-wrapt all the city wall,
The city gates were flame-wrapt all.

What was man's strength, what puissance then ?
Women were mighty as strong men.
Some knelt in prayer, believing still,
Resigned into a righteous will,
Bowing beneath the chastening rod,
Lost to the world, but found of God.
Some prayed for friend, for child, for wife ;
Some prayed for faith ; some prayed for life ;
While some, proud even in death, hope gone,
Steadfast and still, stood looking on.

'Death—death—oh let us fly from death!
Where'er we go it followeth;
All these are dead; and we alone
Remain to weep for what is gone.
What is this thing? thus hurriedly
To pass into eternity;
To leave the earth so full of mirth;
To lose the profit of our birth;
To die and be no more; to cease,
Having numbness that is not peace.
Let us go hence; and, even if thus
Death everywhere must go with us,
Let us not see the change, but see
Those who have been or still shall be.'

He sighed, and they went on together.
Beneath their feet did the grass wither;
Across the heaven high overhead
Dark misty clouds floated and fled;
And in their bosom was the thunder,
And angry lightnings flashed out under,
Forked and red and menacing;
Far off the wind was muttering;
It seemed to tell, not understood,
Strange secrets to the listening wood.

Upon its wings it bore the scent
Of blood of a great armament:
Then saw they how on either side
Fields were down-trodden far and wide.
That morning at the break of day
Two nations had gone forth to slay.

As a man soweth so he reaps.
The field was full of bleeding heaps;
Ghastly corpses of men and horses
That met death at a thousand sources;
Cold limbs and putrefying flesh;
Long love-locks clotted to a mesh
That stifled: stiffened mouths beneath
Staring eyes that had looked on death.

But these were dead: these felt no more
The anguish of the wounds they bore.
Behold, they shall not sigh again,
Nor justly fear, nor hope in vain.
What if none wept above them?—is
The sleeper less at rest for this?
Is not the young child's slumber sweet
When no man watcheth over it?

These had deep calm; but all around
There was a deadly smothered sound,
The choking cry of agony
From wounded men who could not die;
Who watched the black wing of the raven
Rise like a cloud 'twixt them and heaven,
And in the distance flying fast
Beheld the eagle come at last.

She knelt down in her agony.
'O Lord, it is enough,' said she:
'My heart's prayer putteth me to shame;
Let me return to whence I came.
Thou who for love's sake didst reprove,
Forgive me for the sake of love.'

December 1847.

THREE NUNS

I

Sospira questo core,
E non so dir perchè.

SHADOW, shadow on the wall,
Spread thy shelter over me;

rap me with a heavy pall,
With the dark that none may see :
ld thyself around me, come ;
ut out all the troublesome
ise of life ; I would be dumb.

adow, thou hast reached my feet ;
Rise and cover up my head ;
my stainless winding-sheet,
Buried before I am dead.
y thy cool upon my breast :
ce I thought that joy was best,
w I only care for rest.

the grating of my cell
Sings a solitary bird ;
eeter than the vesper bell,
Sweetest song was ever heard.[1]
g upon thy living tree ;
ppy echoes answer thee ;
ppy songster, sing to me.

hen my yellow hair was curled,
Though men saw and called me fair,
was weary in the world
Full of vanity and care.
ld was left behind, curls shorn,
hen I came here ; that same morn
ade a bride no gems adorn.

ere wrapt in my spotless veil,
Curtained from intruding eyes,
whom prayers and fasts turn pale
Wait the flush of Paradise.
t the vigil is so long
y heart sickens :—sing thy song,
ythe bird that canst do no wrong.

ng on, making me forget
Present sorrow and past sin.

[1] "Sweetest eyes were ever seen."
E. B. BROWNING.

Sing a little longer yet :
Soon the matins will begin ;
And I must turn back again
To that aching, worse than pain,—
I must bear and not complain.

Sing ; that in thy song I may
Dream myself once more a child
In the green woods far away,
Plucking clematis and wild
Hyacinths, till pleasure grew
Tired, yet so was pleasure too,
Resting with no work to do.

In the thickest of the wood
I remember long ago
How a stately oaktree stood
With a sluggish pool below
Almost shadowed out of sight ;
On the waters dark as night
Water-lilies lay like light.

There, while yet a child, I thought
I could live as in a dream ;
Secret, neither found not sought ;
Till the lilies on the stream,
Pure as virgin purity,
Would seem scarce too pure for me :—
Ah but that can never be !

II

Sospirerà d' amore,
Ma non lo dice a me.

I loved him ; yes, where was the sin ?
I loved him with my heart and soul;
But I pressed forward to no goal,
There was no prize I strove to win.
Show me my sin that I may see :
Throw the first stone, thou Pharisee.

I loved him, but I never sought
That he should know that I was fair.

I prayed for him; was my sin prayer?
I sacrificed, he never bought;
He nothing gave, he nothing took;
We never bartered look for look.

My voice rose in the sacred choir,
The choir of nuns: do you condemn
Even if when kneeling among them
Faith, zeal, and love, kindled a fire,
And I prayed for his happiness
Who knew not? was my error this?

I only prayed that in the end
His trust and hope may not be vain;
I prayed not we may meet again:
I would not let our names ascend,
No not to Heaven, in the same breath;
Nor will I join the two in death.

Oh sweet is death, for I am weak
And weary, and it giveth rest.
The crucifix lies on my breast,
And all night long it seems to speak
Of rest; I hear it through my sleep,
And the great comfort makes me weep.

Oh sweet is death that bindeth up
The broken and the bleeding heart.
The draught chilled, but a cordial part
Lurked at the bottom of the cup;
And for my patience will my Lord
Give an exceeding great reward.

Yea the reward is almost won,
A crown of glory and a palm.
Soon I shall sing the unknown psalm;
Soon gaze on light, not on the sun;
And soon with surer faith shall pray
For him, and cease not night nor day.

My life is breaking like a cloud—
God judgeth not as man doth judge—
Nay, bear with me: you need not grudge
This peace; the vows that I have vowed
Have all been kept: Eternal Strength
Holds me, though mine own fails at length.

Bury me in the Convent-ground
Among the flowers that are so sweet;
And lay a green turf at my feet,
Where thick trees cast a gloom around;
At my head let a cross be, white
Through the long blackness of the night.

Now kneel and pray beside my bed
That I may sleep being free from pain;
And pray that I may wake again
After His likeness who hath said
(Faithful is He who promiseth)
We shall be satisfied therewith.

III

Rispondimi, cor mio,
Perchè sospiri tu?
Risponde: Voglio Dio,
Sospiro per Gesù.

My heart is as a freeborn bird
Caged in my cruel breast,

That flutters, flutters evermore,
Nor sings nor is at rest,
But beats against the prison bars,
As knowing its own nest
Far off beyond the clouded west.

My soul is as a hidden fount
Shut in by clammy clay
That struggles with an upward moan,
Striving to force its way
Up through the turf, over the grass,
Up up into the day
Where twilight no more turneth grey.

Oh for the grapes of the True Vine
Growing in Paradise,
Whose tendrils join the Tree of Life
To that which maketh wise—
Growing beside the Living Well
Whose sweetest waters rise
Where tears are wiped from tearful eyes!

Oh for the waters of that Well
Round which the Angels stand—
Oh for the Shadow of the Rock
On my heart's weary land—
Oh for the Voice to guide me when
I turn to either hand,
Guiding me till I reach heaven's strand!

Thou world from which I am come out,
Keep all thy gems and gold;
Keep thy delights and precious things,
Thou that art waxing old.
My heart shall beat with a new life
When thine is dead and cold;
When thou dost fear I shall be bold.

When Earth shall pass away with all
Her pride and pomp of sin,
The City builded without hands
Shall safely shut me in.
All the rest is but vanity
Which others strive to win:
Where their hopes end my joys begin.

I will not look upon a rose
Though it is fair to see:
The flowers planted in Paradise
Are budding now for me:
Red roses like love visible
Are blowing on their tree,
Or white like virgin purity.

I will not look unto the sun
Which setteth night by night:
In the untrodden courts of heaven
My crown shall be more bright.
Lo in the New Jerusalem
Founded and built aright
My very feet shall tread on light.

With foolish riches of this world
I have bought treasure where
Nought perisheth: for this white veil
I gave my golden hair;
I gave the beauty of my face
For vigils, fasts, and prayer;
I gave all for this cross I bear.

My heart trembled when first I took
The vows which must be kept.
At first it was a weariness
To watch when once I slept:
The path was rough and sharp with thorns;
My feet bled as I stept;
The cross was heavy and I wept.

While still the names rang in mine ears
Of daughter, sister, wife,

The outside world still looked so fair
To my weak eyes, and rife
With beauty, my heart almost failed;
Then in the desperate strife
I prayed, as one who prays for life,—

Until I grew to love what once
Had been so burdensome.
So now, when I am faint because
Hope deferred seems to numb
My heart, I yet can plead, and say,
Although my lips are dumb—
The Spirit and the Bride say, Come.

12 *February* 1849 to 10 *May* 1850.

THE LOWEST ROOM

LIKE flowers sequestered from the sun
And wind of summer, day by day
I dwindled paler, whilst my hair
Showed the first tinge of grey.

'Oh what is life, that we should live?
Or what is death, that we must die?
A bursting bubble is our life:
I also, what am I?'

'What is your grief? now tell me, sweet,
That I may grieve,' my sister said;
And stayed a white embroidering hand
And raised a golden head:

Her tresses showed a richer mass,
Her eyes looked softer than my own;
Her figure had a statelier height,
Her voice a tenderer tone.

'Some must be second and not first;
All cannot be the first of all:
Is not this too but vanity?
I stumble like to fall.

'So yesterday I read the acts
Of Hector and each clangorous king
With wrathful great Æacides:—
Old Homer leaves a sting.'

The comely face looked up again,
The deft hand lingered on the thread.
'Sweet, tell me what is Homer's sting,
Old Homer's sting,' she said.

'He stirs my sluggish pulse like wine,
He melts me like the wind of spice,
Strong as strong Ajax' red right hand,
And grand like Juno's eyes.

'I cannot melt the sons of men,
I cannot fire and tempest-toss:—
Besides, those days were golden days,
Whilst these are days of dross.'

She laughed a feminine low laugh,
Yet did not stay her dexterous hand:
'Now tell me of those days,' she said,
'When time ran golden sand.'

'Then men were men of might and right,
Sheer might, at least, and weighty swords:
Then men in open blood and fire
Bore witness to their words—

Crest-rearing kings with whistling spears;
But if these shivered in the shock
hey wrenched up hundred-rooted trees,
Or hurled the effacing rock.

Then hand to hand, then foot to foot,
Stern to the death-grip grappling then,
Vho ever thought of gunpowder
Amongst these men of men?

They knew whose hand struck home the death,
They knew who broke but would not bend,
ould venerate an equal foe
And scorn a laggard friend.

Calm in the utmost stress of doom,
Devout toward adverse powers above,
hey hated with intenser hate
And loved with fuller love.

Then heavenly beauty could allay
As heavenly beauty stirred the strife:
y them a slave was worshipped more
Than is by us a wife.'

he laughed again, my sister laughed;
Made answer o'er the laboured cloth,
rather would be one of us
Than wife, or slave, or both.'

Oh better then be slave or wife
Than fritter now blank life away:
hen night had holiness of night,
And day was sacred day.

'The princess laboured at her loom,
Mistress and handmaiden alike;
Beneath their needles grew the field
With warriors armed to strike.

'Or, look again, dim Dian's face
Gleamed perfect through the attendant night;
Were such not better than those holes
Amid that waste of white?

'A shame it is, our aimless life;
I rather from my heart would feed
From silver dish in gilded stall
With wheat and wine the steed,

'The faithful steed that bore my lord
In safety through the hostile land,
The faithful steed that arched his neck
To fondle with my hand.'

Her needle erred; a moment's pause,
A moment's patience, all was well.
Then she: 'But just suppose the horse,
Suppose the rider fell?

'Then captive in an alien house,
Hungering on exile's bitter bread,—
They happy, they who won the lot
Of sacrifice,' she said.

Speaking she faltered, while her look
Showed forth her passion like a glass;
With hand suspended, kindling eye,
Flushed cheek, how fair she was!

'Ah well, be those the days of dross;
This, if you will, the age of gold:

Yet had those days a spark of warmth,
While these are somewhat cold—

'Are somewhat mean and cold and slow,
Are stunted from heroic growth:
We gain but little when we prove
The worthlessness of both.'

'But life is in our hands,' she said:
'In our own hands for gain or loss:
Shall not the Sevenfold Sacred Fire
Suffice to purge our dross?

'Too short a century of dreams,
One day of work sufficient length;
Why should not you, why should not I,
Attain heroic strength?

'Our life is given us as a blank;
Ourselves must make it blest or curst:
Who dooms me I shall only be
The second, not the first?

'Learn from old Homer, if you will,
Such wisdom as his books have said:
In one the acts of Ajax shine,
In one of Diomed.

'Honoured all heroes whose high deeds
Through life, through death, enlarge their span;
Only Achilles in his rage
And sloth is less than man.'

'Achilles only less than man?
He less than man who, half a god,
Discomfited all Greece with rest,
Cowed Ilion with a nod?

'He offered vengeance, lifelong grief
To one dear ghost, uncounted price:
Beasts, Trojans, adverse gods, himself,
Heaped up the sacrifice.

'Self-immolated to his friend,
Shrined in world's wonder, Homer's page,
Is this the man, the less than men
Of this degenerate age?'

'Gross from his acorns, tusky boar
Does memorable acts like his;
So for her snared offended young
Bleeds the swart lioness.'

But here she paused; our eyes had met,
And I was whitening with the jeer;
She rose; 'I went too far,' she said;
Spoke low; 'Forgive me, dear.

'To me our days seem pleasant days,
Our home a haven of pure content;
Forgive me if I said too much,
So much more than I meant.

'Homer, though greater than his gods,
With rough-hewn virtues was sufficed
And rough-hewn men: but what are such
To us who learn of Christ?'

The much-moved pathos of her voice,
Her almost tearful eyes, her cheek
Grown pale, confessed the strength of love
Which only made her speak:

'or mild she was, of few soft words,
Most gentle, easy to be led,
ontent to listen when I spoke
And reverence what I said;

elder sister by six years;
Not half so glad, or wise, or good:
er words rebuked my secret self
And shamed me where I stood.

ıe never guessed her words reproved
A silent envy nursed within,
selfish, souring discontent,
Pride-born, the devil's sin.

smiled, half bitter, half in jest:
'The wisest man of all the wise
ft for his summary of life
"Vanity of vanities."

Beneath the sun there's nothing new:
Men flow, men ebb, mankind flows on:
I am wearied of my life,
Why so was Solomon.

Vanity of vanities he preached
Of all he found, of all he sought:
nities of vanities, the gist
Of all the words he taught.

his in the wisdom of the world,
In Homer's page, in all, we find:
the sea is not filled, so yearns
Man's universal mind.

his Homer felt, who gave his men
With glory but a transient state:
s very Jove could not reverse
Irrevocable fate.

'Uncertain all their lot save this—
Who wins must lose, who lives must die:
All trodden out into the dark
Alike, all vanity.'

She scarcely answered when I paused
But rather to herself said: 'One
Is here,' low-voiced and loving, 'yea,
Greater than Solomon.'

So both were silent, she and I:
She laid her work aside, and went
Into the garden-walks, like Spring,
All gracious with content;

A little graver than her wont,
Because her words had fretted me;
Not warbling quite her merriest tune
Bird-like from tree to tree.

I chose a book to read and dream:
Yet half the while with furtive eyes
Marked how she made her choice of flowers
Intuitively wise,

And ranged them with instinctive taste
Which all my books had failed to teach;
Fresh rose herself, and daintier
Than blossom of the peach.

By birthright higher than myself,
Though nestling of the self-same nest:
No fault of hers, no fault of mine,
But stubborn to digest.

I watched her, till my book unmarked
Slid noiseless to the velvet floor;
Till all the opulent summer-world
Looked poorer than before.

Just then her busy fingers ceased,
Her fluttered colour went and came:
I knew whose step was on the walk,
Whose voice would name her name.

* * * * *

Well, twenty years have passed since then:
My sister now, a stately wife
Still fair, looks back in peace and sees
The longer half of life—

The longer half of prosperous life,
With little grief, or fear, or fret:
She, loved and loving long ago,
Is loved and loving yet.

A husband honourable, brave,
Is her main wealth in all the world:
And next to him one like herself,
One daughter golden-curled;

Fair image of her own fair youth,
As beautiful and as serene,
With almost such another love
As her own love has been.

Yet, though of world-wide charity,
And in her home most tender dove,
Her treasure and her heart are stored
In the home-land of love:

She thrives, God's blessed husbandry;
Most like a vine which full of fruit
Doth cling and lean and climb toward heaven
While earth still binds its root.

I sit and watch my sister's face:
How little altered since the hours
When she, a kind light-hearted girl,
Gathered her garden flowers,

Her song just mellowed by regret
For having teased me with her talk;
Then all-forgetful as she heard
One step upon the walk.

While I? I sat alone and watched;
My lot in life, to live alone
In mine own world of interests,
Much felt but little shown.

Not to be first: how hard to learn
That lifelong lesson of the past;
Line graven on line and stroke on stroke,
But, thank God, learned at last.

So now in patience I possess
My soul year after tedious year,
Content to take the lowest place,
The place assigned me here.

Yet sometimes, when I feel my strength
Most weak, and life most burdensome,
I lift mine eyes up to the hills
From whence my help shall come:

Yea, sometimes still I lift my heart
To the Archangelic trumpet-burst,
When all deep secrets shall be shown,
And many last be first.

30 *September* 1856.

FROM HOUSE TO HOME

THE first was like a dream through summer heat,
The second like a tedious numbing swoon

While the half-frozen pulses lagged
to beat
Beneath a winter moon.

But,' says my friend, 'what was
this thing and where?'
It was a pleasure-place within my
soul;
An earthly paradise supremely fair
That lured me from the goal.

The first part was a tissue of hugged
lies;
The second was its ruin fraught
with pain:
Why raise the fair delusion to the
skies
But to be dashed again?

My castle stood of white transparent
glass
Glittering and frail with many a
fretted spire,
But when the summer sunset came
to pass
It kindled into fire.

My pleasaunce was an undulating
green,
Stately with trees whose shadows
slept below,
With glimpses of smooth garden-
beds between
Like flame or sky or snow.

Swift squirrels on the pastures took
their ease,
With leaping lambs safe from the
unfeared knife;
All singing-birds rejoicing in those
trees
Fulfilled their careless life.

Woodpigeons cooed there, stock-
doves nestled there;
My trees were full of songs and
flowers and fruit;
Their branches spread a city to the
air
And mice lodged in their root.

My heath lay farther off, where
lizards lived
In strange metallic mail, just spied
and gone;
Like darted lightnings here and there
perceived
But nowhere dwelt upon.

Frogs and fat toads were there to
hop or plod
And propagate in peace, an un-
couth crew,
Where velvet-headed rushes rustling
nod
And spill the morning dew.

All caterpillars throve beneath my
rule,
With snails and slugs in corners
out of sight;
I never marred the curious sudden
stool
That perfects in a night.

Safe in his excavated gallery
The burrowing mole groped on
from year to year;
No harmless hedgehog curled be-
cause of me
His prickly back for fear.

Oft-times one like an angel walked
with me,
With spirit-discerning eyes like
flames of fire
But deep as the unfathomed endless
sea,
Fulfilling my desire:

And sometimes like a snowdrift he was fair,
And sometimes like a sunset glorious red,
And sometimes he had wings to scale the air
With aureole round his head.

We sang our songs together by the way,
Calls and recalls and echoes of delight;
So communed we together all the day,
And so in dreams by night.

I have no words to tell what way we walked,
What unforgotten path now closed and sealed:
I have no words to tell all things we talked,
All things that he revealed:

This only can I tell: that hour by hour
I waxed more feastful, lifted up and glad;
I felt no thorn-prick when I plucked a flower,
Felt not my friend was sad.

'To-morrow,' once I said to him with smiles.
'To-night,' he answered gravely; and was dumb,
But pointed out the stones that numbered miles
And miles and miles to come.

'Not so,' I said: 'to-morrow shall be sweet:
To-night is not so sweet as coming days.'

Then first I saw that he had turned his feet,
Had turned from me his face:

Running and flying miles and miles he went,
But once looked back to beckon with his hand,
And cry: 'Come home, O love, from banishment:
Come to the distant land.'

That night destroyed me like an avalanche;
One night turned all my summer back to snow:
Next morning not a bird upon my branch,
Not a lamb woke below,—

No bird, no lamb, no living breathing thing;
No squirrel scampered on my breezy lawn,
No mouse lodged by his hoard: all joys took wing
And fled before that dawn.

Azure and sun were starved from heaven above,
No dew had fallen, but biting frost lay hoar:
O love, I knew that I should meet my love,
Should find my love no more.

'My love no more,' I muttered, stunned with pain:
I shed no tear, I wrung no passionate hand,
Till something whispered: 'You shall meet again,
Meet in a distant land.'

Then with a cry like famine I arose,
I lit my candle, searched from room to room,
Searched up and down; a war of winds that froze
Swept through the blank of gloom.

I searched day after day, night after night;
Scant change there came to me of night or day:
'No more,' I wailed, 'no more:' and trimmed my light,
And gnashed but did not pray,

Until my heart broke and my spirit broke:
Upon the frost-bound floor I stumbled, fell,
And moaned: 'It is enough: withhold the stroke.
Farewell, O love, farewell.'

Then life swooned from me. And I heard the song
Of spheres and spirits rejoicing over me:
One cried: 'Our sister, she hath suffered long.'—
One answered: 'Make her see.'

One cried: 'Oh blessèd she who no more pain,
Who no more disappointment shall receive.'—
One answered: 'Not so: she must live again;
Strengthen thou her to live.'

So while I lay entranced a curtain seemed
To shrivel with crackling from before my face:
Across mine eyes a waxing radiance beamed
And showed a certain place.

I saw a vision of a woman, where
Night and new morning strive for domination;
Incomparably pale, and almost fair,
And sad beyond expression.

Her eyes were like some fire-enshrining gem,
Were stately like the stars, and yet were tender;
Her figure charmed me like a windy stem
Quivering and drooped and slender.

I stood upon the outer barren ground,
She stood on inner ground that budded flowers;
While circling in their never-slackening round
Danced by the mystic hours.

But every flower was lifted on a thorn,
And every thorn shot upright from its sands
To gall her feet; hoarse laughter pealed in scorn
With cruel clapping hands.

She bled and wept, yet did not shrink; her strength
Was strung up until daybreak of delight:
She measured measureless sorrow toward its length,
And breadth, and depth, and height.

Then marked I how a chain sustained her form,

A chain of living links not made nor riven :
It stretched sheer up through lightning, wind, and storm,
And anchored fast in heaven.

One cried : 'How long? yet founded on the Rock
She shall do battle, suffer, and attain.'—
One answered : 'Faith quakes in the tempest shock—
Strengthen her soul again.'

I saw a cup sent down and come to her
Brimfull of loathing and of bitterness :
She drank with livid lips that seemed to stir
The depth, not make it less.

But as she drank I spied a hand distil
New wine and virgin honey ; making it
First bitter-sweet, then sweet indeed, until
She tasted only sweet.

Her lips and cheeks waxed rosy-fresh and young ;
Drinking she sang 'My soul shall nothing want ;'
And drank anew : while soft a song was sung,
A mystical slow chant.

One cried : 'The wounds are faithful of a friend :
The wilderness shall blossom as a rose.'—
One answered : 'Rend the veil, declare the end,
Strengthen her ere she goes.'

Then earth and heaven were rolled up like a scroll ;
Time and space, change and death, had passed away ;
Weight, number, measure, each had reached its whole :
The day had come, that day.

Multitudes—multitudes—stood up in bliss,
Made equal to the angels, glorious, fair ;
With harps, palms, wedding-garments, kiss of peace,
And crowned and haloed hair.

They sang a song, a new song in the height,
Harping with harps to Him who is strong and true :
They drank new wine, their eyes saw with new light,
Lo all things were made new.

Tier beyond tier they rose and rose and rose,
So high that it was dreadful, flames with flames :
No man could number them, no tongue disclose
Their secret sacred names.

As though one pulse stirred all, one rush of blood
Fed all, one breath swept through them myriad-voiced,
They struck their harps, cast down their crowns, they stood
And worshipped and rejoiced.

Each face looked one way like a moon new-lit,
Each face looked one way towards its Sun of Love ;

)rank love and bathed in love and mirrored it
And knew no end thereof.

Glory touched glory on each blessèd head,
Hands locked dear hands never to sunder more:
These were the new-begotten from the dead
Whom the great birthday bore.

Heart answered heart, soul answered soul at rest,
Double against each other, filled, sufficed:
All loving, loved of all; but loving best
And best beloved of Christ.

I saw that one who lost her love in pain,
Who trod on thorns, who drank the loathsome cup;
The lost in night, in day was found again;
The fallen was lifted up.

They stood together in the blessèd noon,
They sang together through the length of days;
Each loving face bent Sunwards like a moon
New-lit with love and praise.

Therefore, O friend, I would not if I might
Rebuild my house of lies, wherein I joyed
One time to dwell: my soul shall walk in white,
Cast down but not destroyed.

Therefore in patience I possess my soul;
Yea, therefore as a flint I set my face,
To pluck down, to build up again the whole—
But in a distant place.

These thorns are sharp, yet I can tread on them;
This cup is loathsome, yet He makes it sweet:
My face is steadfast toward Jerusalem,
My heart remembers it.

I lift the hanging hands, the feeble knees—
I, precious more than seven times molten gold—
Until the day when from His storehouses
God shall bring new and old;

Beauty for ashes, oil of joy for grief,
Garment of praise for spirit of heaviness:
Although to-day I fade as doth a leaf,
I languish and grow less.

Although to-day He prunes my twigs with pain,
Yet doth His blood nourish and warm my root:
To-morrow I shall put forth buds again
And clothe myself with fruit.

Although to-day I walk in tedious ways,
To-day His staff is turned into a rod,
Yet will I wait for Him the appointed days
And stay upon my God.

19 *November* 1858.

THE PRINCE'S PROGRESS

TILL all sweet gums and juices flow,
Till the blossom of blossoms blow,
The long hours go and come and go;
The bride she sleepeth, waketh, sleepeth,
Waiting for one whose coming is slow:—
Hark! the bride weepeth.

'How long shall I wait, come heat come rime?'—
'Till the strong Prince comes, who must come in time'
(Her women say): 'there's a mountain to climb,
A river to ford. Sleep, dream and sleep;
Sleep' (they say): 'we've muffled the chime;
Better dream than weep.'

In his world-end palace the strong Prince sat,
Taking his ease on cushion and mat;
Close at hand lay his staff and his hat.
'When wilt thou start? the bride waits, O youth.'—
'Now the moon's at full; I tarried for that;
Now I start in truth.

'But tell me first, true voice of my doom,
Of my veiled bride in her maiden bloom;
Keeps she watch through glare and through gloom,
Watch for me asleep and awake?'—
'Spell-bound she watches in one white room,
And is patient for thy sake.

'By her head lilies and rosebuds grow;
The lilies droop, will the rosebuds blow?
The silver slim lilies hang the head low;
Their stream is scanty, their sunshine rare:
Let the sun blaze out, and let the stream flow,
They will blossom and wax fair.

'Red and white poppies grow at her feet.
The blood-red wait for sweet summer heat,
Wrapped in bud-coats, hairy and neat;
But the white buds swell, one day they will burst,
Will open their death cups drowsy and sweet:—
Which will open the first?'

Then a hundred sad voices lifted a wail,
And a hundred glad voices piped on the gale:
'Time is short, life is short,' they took up the tale:
'Life is sweet, love is sweet, use to-day while you may;
Love is sweet, and to-morrow may fail;
Love is sweet, use to-day.'

While the song swept by, beseeching and meek,
Up rose the Prince with a flush on his cheek,
Up he rose to stir and to seek,
Going forth in the joy of his strength:

Strong of limb if of purpose weak,
Starting at length.

Forth he set in the breezy morn,
Across green fields of nodding corn,
As goodly a Prince as ever was born,
Carolling with the carolling lark;—
Sure his bride will be won and worn
Ere fall of the dark.

So light his step, so merry his smile,
A milkmaid loitered beside a stile,
Set down her pail and rested awhile,
A wave-haired milkmaid, rosy and white;
The Prince, who had journeyed at least a mile,
Grew athirst at the sight.

'Will you give me a morning draught?'—
'You're kindly welcome,' she said, and laughed.
He lifted the pail, new milk he quaffed;
Then wiping his curly black beard like silk:
'Whitest cow that ever was calved
Surely gave you this milk.'

Was it milk now, or was it cream?
Was she a maid, or an evil dream?
Her eyes began to glitter and gleam;
He would have gone, but he stayed instead;
Green they gleamed as he looked in them:
'Give me my fee,' she said.—

'I will give you a jewel of gold.'—
'Not so; gold is heavy and cold.'—
'I will give you a velvet fold
Of foreign work your beauty to deck.'—

'Better I like my kerchief rolled
Light and white round my neck.'—

'Nay,' cried he, 'but fix your own fee.'—
She laughed, 'You may give the full moon to me,
Or else sit under this apple-tree
Here for one idle day by my side;
After that I'll let you go free,
And the world is wide.'

Loth to stay, yet to leave her slack,
He half turned away, then he quite turned back:
For courtesy's sake he could not lack
To redeem his own royal pledge;
Ahead too the windy heaven lowered black
With a fire-cloven edge.

So he stretched his length in the apple-tree shade,
Lay and laughed and talked to the maid,
Who twisted her hair in a cunning braid
And writhed it in shining serpent-coils,
And held him a day and a night fast laid
In her subtle toils.

At the death of night and the birth of day,
When the owl left off his sober play,
And the bat hung himself out of the way,
Woke the song of mavis and merle,
And heaven put off its hodden grey
For mother-o'-pearl.

Peeped up daisies here and there,
Here, there, and everywhere;
Rose a hopeful lark in the air,
Spreading out towards the sun his breast;
While the moon set solemn and fair
Away in the West.

'Up, up, up,' called the watchman lark,
In his clear réveillée; 'Hearken, oh hark!
Press to the high goal, fly to the mark.
Up, O sluggard, new morn is born;
If still asleep when the night falls dark,
Thou must wait a second morn.'

'Up, up, up,' sad glad voices swelled:
'So the tree falls and lies as it's felled.
Be thy bands loosed, O sleeper, long held
In sweet sleep whose end is not sweet.
Be the slackness girt and the softness quelled
And the slowness fleet.'

Off he set. The grass grew rare,
A blight lurked in the darkening air,
The very moss grew hueless and spare,
The last daisy stood all astunt;
Behind his back the soil lay bare,
But barer in front.

A land of chasm and rent, a land
Of rugged blackness on either hand:
If water trickled its track was tanned
With an edge of rust to the chink;
If one stamped on stone or on sand
It returned a clink.

A lifeless land, a loveless land,
Without lair or nest on either hand:
Only scorpions jerked in the sand,
Black as black iron, or dusty pale;
From point to point sheer rock was manned
By scorpions in mail.

A land of neither life nor death,
Where no man buildeth or fashioneth,
Where none draws living or dying breath;
No man cometh or goeth there,
No man doeth, seeketh, saith,
In the stagnant air.

Some old volcanic upset must
Have rent the crust and blackened the crust,
Wrenched and ribbed it beneath its dust,
Above earth's molten centre at seethe,
Heaved and heaped it by huge up-thrust
Of fire beneath.

Untrodden before, untrodden since:
Tedious land for a social Prince;
Halting, he scanned the outs and ins,
Endless, labyrinthine, grim,
Of the solitude that made him wince,
Laying wait for him.

By bulging rock and gaping cleft,
Even of half mere daylight reft,
Rueful he peered to right and left,
Muttering in his altered mood:
'The fate is hard that weaves my weft,
Though my lot be good.'

Dim the changes of day to night,
Of night scarce dark to day not bright.

Still his road wound towards the right,
Still he went, and still he went,
Till one night he spied a light,
In his discontent.

But it flashed from a yawn-mouthed cave,
Like a red-hot eye from a grave.
No man stood there of whom to crave
Rest for wayfarer plodding by:
Though the tenant were churl or knave
The Prince might try.

In he passed and tarried not,
Groping his way from spot to spot,
Towards where the cavern flare glowed hot:
An old, old mortal, cramped and double,
Was peering into a seething-pot,
In a world of trouble.

The veriest atomy he looked,
With grimy fingers clutching and crooked,
Tight skin, a nose all bony and hooked,
And a shaking, sharp, suspicious way;
Blinking, his eyes had scarcely brooked
The light of day.

Stared the Prince, for the sight was new;
Stared, but asked without more ado;
'May a weary traveller lodge with you,
Old father, here in your lair?
In your country the inns seem few,
And scanty the fare.'

The head turned not to hear him speak;
The old voice whistled as through a leak
(Out it came in a quavering squeak):
'Work for wage is a bargain fit:
If there's aught of mine that you seek
You must work for it.

'Buried alive from light and air
This year is the hundredth year,
I feed my fire with a sleepless care,
Watching my potion wane or wax:
Elixir of Life is simmering there,
And but one thing lacks.

'If you're fain to lodge here with me,
Take that pair of bellows you see—
Too heavy for my old hands they be—
Take the bellows and puff and puff:
When the steam curls rosy and free
The broth's boiled enough.

'Then take your choice of all I have;
I will give you life if you crave.
Already I'm mildewed for the grave,
So first myself I must drink my fill:
But all the rest may be yours, to save
Whomever you will.'

'Done,' quoth the Prince, and the bargain stood.
First he piled on resinous wood,
Next plied the bellows in hopeful mood;
Thinking, 'My love and I will live.
If I tarry, why life is good,
And she may forgive.'

The pot began to bubble and boil;
The old man cast in essence and oil,
He stirred all up with a triple coil
Of gold and silver and iron wire,
Dredged in a pinch of virgin soil,
And fed the fire.

But still the steam curled watery white;
Night turned to day and day to night;
One thing lacked, by his feeble sight
Unseen, unguessed by his feeble mind:
Life might miss him, but Death the blight
Was sure to find.

So when the hundredth year was full
The thread was cut and finished the school.
Death snapped the old worn-out tool,
Snapped him short while he stood and stirred
(Though stiff he stood as a stiff-necked mule)
With never a word.

Thus at length the old crab was nipped.
The dead hand slipped, the dead finger dipped
In the broth as the dead man slipped:—
That same instant, a rosy red
Flushed the steam, and quivered and clipped
Round the dead old head.

The last ingredient was supplied
(Unless the dead man mistook or lied).
Up started the Prince, he cast aside
The bellows plied through the tedious trial,
Made sure that his host had died,
And filled a phial.

'One night's rest,' thought the Prince: 'This done,
Forth I speed with the rising sun:
With the morrow I rise and run,
Come what will of wind or of weather.
This draught of life, when my bride is won,
We'll drink together.'

Thus the dead man stayed in his grave,
Self-chosen, the dead man in his cave;
There he stayed, were he fool or knave,
Or honest seeker who had not found:
While the Prince outside was prompt to crave
Sleep on the ground.

'If she watches, go bid her sleep;
Bid her sleep, for the road is steep:
He can sleep who holdeth her cheap,
Sleep and wake and sleep again.
Let him sow, one day he shall reap,
Let him sow the grain.

'When there blows a sweet garden rose,
Let it bloom and wither if no man knows:
But if one knows when the sweet thing blows,
Knows, and lets it open and drop,
If but a nettle his garden grows
He hath earned the crop.'

Through his sleep the summons rang,
Into his ears it sobbed and it sang.

Slow he woke with a drowsy pang,
Shook himself without much debate,
Turned where he saw green branches hang,
Started though late.

For the black land was travelled o'er.
He should see the grim land no more.
A flowering country stretched before
His face when the lovely day came back:
He hugged the phial of Life he bore,
And resumed his track.

By willow courses he took his path,
Spied what a nest the kingfisher hath,
Marked the fields green to aftermath,
Marked where the red-brown field-mouse ran,
Loitered a while for a deep stream bath,
Yawned for a fellow-man.

Up on the hills not a soul in view,
In the vale not many nor few;
Leaves, still leaves and nothing new.
It's oh for a second maiden, at least,
To bear the flagon, and taste it too,
And flavour the feast.

Lagging he moved, and apt to swerve;
Lazy of limb, but quick of nerve.
At length the water-bed took a curve,
The deep river swept its bankside bare;
Waters streamed from the hill-reserve—
Waters here, waters there.

High above and deep below,
Bursting, bubbling, swelling the flow,
Like hill torrents after the snow,—
Bubbling, gurgling, in whirling strife,
Swaying, sweeping to and fro,—
He must swim for his life.

Which way?—which way?—his eyes grew dim
With the dizzying whirl—which way to swim?
The thunderous downshoot deafened him;
Half he choked in the lashing spray:
Life is sweet, and the grave is grim—
Which way?—which way?

A flash of light, a shout from the strand:
'This way—this way; here lies the land!'
His phial clutched in one drowning hand;
He catches—misses—catches a rope;
His feet slip on the slipping sand:
Is there life?—is there hope?

Just saved, without pulse or breath—
Scarcely saved from the gulp of death;
Laid where a willow shadoweth—
Laid where a swelling turf is smooth.
(O Bride! but the Bridegroom lingereth
For all thy sweet youth.)

Kind hands do and undo,
Kind voices whisper and coo:

'I will chafe his hands'—'And I'
—'And you
Raise his head, put his hair aside.'
(If many laugh, one well may rue:
Sleep on, thou Bride.)

So the Prince was tended with care:
One wrung foul ooze from his clustered hair;
Two chafed his hands, and did not spare;
But one propped his head that drooped awry:
Till his eyes oped, and at unaware
They met eye to eye.

Oh a moon face in a shadowy place,
And a light touch and a winsome grace,
And a thrilling tender voice which says:
'Safe from waters that seek the sea
Cold waters by rugged ways—
Safe with me.'

While overhead bird whistles to bird,
And round about plays a gamesome herd:
'Safe with us'—some take up the word—
'Safe with us, dear lord and friend:
All the sweeter if long deferred
Is rest in the end.'

Had he stayed to weigh and to scan,
He had been more or less than a man:
He did what a young man can,
Spoke of toil and an arduous way—
Toil to-morrow, while golden ran
The sands of to-day.

Slip past, slip fast,
Uncounted hours from first to last,
Many hours till the last is past,
Many hours dwindling to one—
One hour whose die is cast,
One last hour gone.

Come, gone—gone for ever—
Gone as an unreturning river—
Gone as to death the merriest liver—
Gone as the year at the dying fall—
To-morrow, to-day, yesterday, never—
Gone once for all.

Came at length the starting-day,
With last words, and last last words to say,
With bodiless cries from far away—
Chiding wailing voices that rang
Like a trumpet-call to the tug and fray;
And thus they sang:

'Is there life?—the lamp burns low;
Is there hope?—the coming is slow:
The promise promised so long ago,
The long promise, has not been kept.
Does she live?—does she die?—she slumbers so
Who so oft has wept.

'Does she live!—does she die?—she languisheth
As a lily drooping to death,
As a drought-worn bird with failing breath,
As a lovely vine without a stay,
As a tree whereof the owner saith,
"Hew it down to-day."'

ıng by that word, the Prince was fain
start on his tedious road again.
crossed the stream where a ford was plain,
He clomb the opposite bank though steep,
d swore to himself to strain and attain
Ere he tasted sleep.

ıge before him a mountain frowned
ith foot of rock on the valley ground,
d head with snows incessant crowned,
And a cloud mantle about its strength,
d a path which the wild goat hath not found
In its breadth and length.

t he was strong to do and dare:
a host had withstood him there,
had braved a host with little care
In his lusty youth and his pride,
ugh to grapple though weak to snare.
He comes, O Bride.

he went where the goat scarce clings,
where the eagle folds her wings,
st the green line of living things,
Where the sun cannot warm the cold,—
he went as a flame enrings
Where there seems no hold.

a fissure barren and black,
the eagles tired upon his track,
l the clouds were left behind his back,
Up till the utmost peak was past:
Then he gasped for breath and his strength fell slack—
He paused at last.

Before his face a valley spread
Where fatness laughed, wine, oil, and bread,
Where all fruit-trees their sweetness shed,
Where all birds made love to their kind,
Where jewels twinkled, and gold lay red
And not hard to find.

Midway down the mountain side
(On its green slope the path was wide)
Stood a house for a royal bride,
Built all of changing opal stone,
The royal palace, till now descried
In his dreams alone.

Less bold than in days of yore,
Doubting now though never before,
Doubting he goes and lags the more:
Is the time late? does the day grow dim?
Rose, will she open the crimson core
Of her heart to him?

Above his head a tangle glows
Of wine-red roses, blushes, snows,
Closed buds and buds that unclose,
Leaves, and moss, and prickles too;
His hand shook as he plucked a rose,
And the rose dropped dew.

Take heart of grace! the potion of Life
May go far to woo him a wife:
If she frown, yet a lover's strife
Lightly raised can be laid again:

A hasty word is never the knife
To cut love in twain.

Far away stretched the royal land,
Fed by dew, by a spice-wind fanned.
Light labour more, and his foot would stand
On the threshold, all labour done;
Easy pleasure laid at his hand,
And the dear Bride won.

His slackening steps pause at the gate—
Does she wake or sleep?—the time is late—
Does she sleep now, or watch and wait?
She has watched, she has waited long,
Watching athwart the golden grate
With a patient song.

Fling the golden portals wide,
The Bridegroom comes to his promised Bride:
Draw the gold-stiff curtains aside,
Let them look on each other's face,
She in her meekness, he in his pride—
Day wears apace.

Day is over, the day that wore.
What is this that comes through the door,
The face covered, the feet before?
This that coming takes his breath;
This Bride not seen, to be seen no more
Save of Bridegroom Death?

Veiled figures carrying her
Sweep by yet make no stir;
There is a smell of spice and myrrh,
A bride-chant burdened with one name;
The bride-song rises steadier
Than the torches' flame:—

'Too late for love, too late for joy,
Too late, too late!
You loitered on the road too long,
You trifled at the gate:
The enchanted dove upon her branch
Died without a mate;
The enchanted princess in her tower
Slept, died, behind the grate;
Her heart was starving all this while
You made it wait.

'Ten years ago, five years ago,
One year ago,
Even then you had arrived in time,
Though somewhat slow;
Then you had known her living face
Which now you cannot know:
The frozen fountain would have leaped,
The buds gone on to blow,
The warm south wind would have awaked
To melt the snow.

'Is she fair now as she lies?
Once she was fair;
Meet queen for any kingly king,
With gold-dust on her hair.
Now these are poppies in her locks,
White poppies she must wear;
Must wear a veil to shroud her face
And the want graven there:
Or is the hunger fed at length,
Cast off the care?

'We never saw her with a smile
Or with a frown;
Her bed seemed never soft to her,
Though tossed of down;

e little heeded what she wore,
Kirtle, or wreath, or gown;
e think her white brows often
ached
Beneath her crown,
ll silvery hairs showed in her locks
That used to be so brown.

Ve never heard her speak in haste;
Her tones were sweet,
id modulated just so much
As it was meet:
r heart sat silent through the noise
And concourse of the street.
ere was no hurry in her hands,
No hurry in her feet;
ere was no bliss drew nigh to her,
That she might run to greet.

ou should have wept her yesterday,
Wasting upon her bed:
t wherefore should you weep to-day
That she is dead?
we who love weep not to-day,
But crown her royal head.
be these poppies that we strew,
Your roses are too red:
be these poppies, not for you
Cut down and spread.'

1 *October* 1861 to *March* 1865.

A ROYAL PRINCESS

Princess king-descended, deckt
with jewels, gilded, drest,
uld rather be a peasant with her
baby at her breast,
all I shine so like the sun, and
am purple like the west.

o and two my guards behind, two
and two before,
o and two on either hand, they
guard me evermore;
Me, poor dove that must not coo—
eagle that must not soar.

All my fountains cast up perfumes,
all my gardens grow
Scented woods and foreign spices,
with all flowers in blow
That are costly, out of season as the
seasons go.

All my walls are lost in mirrors,
whereupon I trace
Self to right hand, self to left hand,
self in every place,
Self-same solitary figure, self-same
seeking face.

Then I have an ivory chair high to
sit upon,
Almost like my father's chair which
is an ivory throne;
There I sit uplift and upright, there
I sit alone.

Alone by day, alone by night, alone
days without end;
My father and my mother give me
treasures, search and spend—
O my father! O my mother! have
you ne'er a friend?

As I am a lofty princess, so my
father is
A lofty king, accomplished in all
kingly subtilties,
Holding in his strong right hand
world-kingdoms' balances.

He has quarrelled with his neigh-
bours, he has scourged his foes;
Vassal counts and princes follow
where his pennon goes,
Long-descended valiant lords whom
the vulture knows,

On whose track the vulture swoops,
when they ride in state
To break the strength of armies and
topple down the great:
Each of these my courteous servant,
none of these my mate.

My father counting up his strength
sets down with equal pen
So many head of cattle, head of
horses, head of men;
These for slaughter, these for labour,
with the how and when.

Some to work on roads, canals; some
to man his ships;
Some to smart in mines beneath
sharp overseers' whips;
Some to trap fur-beasts in lands
where utmost winter nips.

Once it came into my heart, and
whelmed me like a flood,
That these too are men and women,
human flesh and blood;
Men with hearts and men with souls,
though trodden down like mud.

Our feasting was not glad that night,
our music was not gay:
On my mother's graceful head I
marked a thread of grey,
My father frowning at the fare
seemed every dish to weigh.

I sat beside them sole princess in my
exalted place,
My ladies and my gentlemen stood
by me on the dais:
A mirror showed me I look old and
haggard in the face;

It showed me that my ladies all are
fair to gaze upon,
Plump, plenteous-haired, to every
one love's secret lore is known
They laugh by day, they sleep by
night; ah me, what is a throne

The singing men and women sang
that night as usual,
The dancers danced in pairs and sets
but music had a fall,
A melancholy windy fall as at a
funeral.

Amid the toss of torches to my
chamber back we swept;
My ladies loosed my golden chain
meantime I could have wept
To think of some in galling chains
whether they waked or slept.

I took my bath of scented milk
delicately waited on:
They burned sweet things for my
delight, cedar and cinnamon,
They lit my shaded silver lamp, and
left me there alone.

A day went by, a week went by. One
day I heard it said:
'Men are clamouring, women
children, clamouring to be fed
Men like famished dogs are howling
in the streets for bread.'

So two whispered by my door, not
thinking I could hear,
Vulgar naked truth, ungarnished for
a royal ear;
Fit for cooping in the background,
not to stalk so near.

But I strained my utmost sense to
catch this truth, and mark:
'There are families out grazing, like
cattle in the park.'

pair of peasants must be saved,
even if we build an ark.'

merry jest, a merry laugh: each
strolled upon his way;
e was my page, a lad I reared and
bore with day by day;
e was my youngest maid, as sweet
and white as cream in May.

ner footsteps followed softly with
a weightier tramp;
ices said: 'Picked soldiers have
been summoned from the camp,
quell these base-born ruffians who
make free to howl and stamp.'

owl and stamp?' one answered:
'They made free to hurl a stone
the minister's state coach, well
aimed and stoutly thrown.'
here's work then for the soldiers, for
this rank crop must be mown.'

ne I saw, a poor old fool with
ashes on his head,
impering because a girl had
snatched his crust of bread:
n he dropped; when some one
raised him, it turned out he was
dead.'

ter us the deluge,' was retorted
with a laugh:
bread's the staff of life they must
walk without a staff.'
hile I've a loaf they're welcome
to my blessing and the chaff.'

se passed. 'The king': stand
up. Said my father with a
smile:
aughter mine, your mother comes
to sit with you awhile;

She's sad to-day, and who but you
her sadness can beguile?'

He too left me. Shall I touch my
harp now while I wait,—
(I hear them doubling guard below
before our palace gate)—
Or shall I work the last gold stitch
into my veil of state;

Or shall my woman stand and read
some unimpassioned scene,—
There's music of a lulling sort in
words that pause between;
Or shall she merely fan me while I
wait here for the queen?

Again I caught my father's voice in
sharp word of command:
'Charge' a clash of steel: 'Charge
again, the rebels stand.
Smite and spare not, hand to hand;
smite and spare not, hand to
hand.'

There swelled a tumult at the gate,
high voices waxing higher;
A flash of red reflected light lit the
cathedral spire;
I heard a cry for faggots, then I
heard a yell for fire.

'Sit and roast there with your meat,
sit and bake there with your
bread,
You who sat to see us starve,' one
shrieking woman said:
'Sit on your throne and roast with
your crown upon your head.'

Nay, this thing will I do, while my
mother tarrieth,
I will take my fine spun gold, but
not to sew therewith,

I will take my gold and gems, and
rainbow fan and wreath;

With a ransom in my lap, a king's
ransom in my hand,
I will go down to this people, will
stand face to face, will stand
Where they curse king, queen, and
princess of this cursed land.

They shall take all to buy them
bread, take all I have to give;
I, if I perish, perish; they to-day
shall eat and live;
I, if I perish, perish—that's the
goal I half conceive:

Once to speak before the world, rend
bare my heart, and show
The lesson I have learned, which is
death, is life, to know.
I, if I perish, perish: in the name
of God I go.

22 *October* 1861.

MAIDEN-SONG

LONG ago and long ago
And long ago still,
There dwelt three merry maidens
Upon a distant hill.
One was tall Meggan,
And one was dainty May,
But one was fair Margaret,
More fair than I can say,
Long ago and long ago.

When Meggan pluckt the thorny
rose,
And when May pulled the brier,
Half the birds would swoop to see,
Half the beasts drew nigher,
Half the fishes of the streams
Would dart up to admire.
But, when Margaret pluckt a flag-
flower
Or poppy hot aflame,
All the beasts and all the birds
And all the fishes came
To her hand more soft than snow.

Strawberry leaves and May-dew
In brisk morning air,
Strawberry leaves and May-dew
Make maidens fair.
'I go for strawberry leaves,'
Meggan said one day:
'Fair Margaret can bide at home,
But you come with me, May:
Up the hill and down the hill,
Along the winding way
You and I are used to go.'

So these two fair sisters
Went with innocent will
Up the hill and down again,
And round the homestead hill:
While the fairest sat at home,
Margaret like a queen,
Like a blush-rose, like the moon
In her heavenly sheen,
Fragrant-breathed as milky cow
Or field of blossoming bean,
Graceful as an ivy bough
Born to cling and lean;
Thus she sat to sing and sew.

When she raised her lustrous eyes
A beast peeped at the door;
When she downward cast her eyes
A fish gasped on the floor;
When she turned away her eyes
A bird perched on the sill,
Warbling out its heart of love,
Warbling warbling still,
With pathetic pleadings low.

ght-foot May with Meggan
Sought the choicest spot,
ɔthed with thyme-alternate grass :
Then, while day waxed hot,
t at ease to play and rest,
A gracious rest and play ;
e loveliest maidens near or far,
When Margaret was away,
ıo sat at home to sing and sew.

n-glow flushed their comely cheeks,
Wind-play tossed their hair,
eeping things among the grass
Stroked them here and there ;
ggan piped a merry note,
A fitful wayward lay
ıile shrill as bird on topmost twig
Piped merry May ;
ɔney-smooth the double flow.

ed a herdsman from the vale,
Mounting like a flame ;
on fire to hear and see,
With floating locks he came.
oked neither north nor south,
Neither east nor west,
t sat him down at Meggan's feet
As love-bird on his nest,
d wooed her with a silent awe,
With trouble not expressed ;
e sang the tears into his eyes,
The heart out of his breast :
he loved her, listening so.

e sang the heart out of his breast,
The words out of his tongue ;
and and foot and pulse he paused
Till her song was sung.
ıen he spoke up from his place
Simple words and true :
canty goods have I to give,
Scanty skill to woo ;
But I have a will to work,
And a heart for you :
Bid me stay or bid me go.'

Then Meggan mused within herself :
'Better be first with him
Than dwell where fairer Margaret sits,
Who shines my brightness dim,
For ever second where she sits,
However fair I be :
I will be lady of his love,
And he shall worship me ;
I will be lady of his herds
And stoop to his degree,
At home where kids and fatlings grow.'

Sped a shepherd from the height
Headlong down to look,
(White lambs followed, lured by love
Of their shepherd's crook) :
He turned neither east nor west,
Neither north nor south,
But knelt right down to May, for love
Of her sweet-singing mouth ;
Forgot his flocks, his panting flocks
In parching hill-side drouth ;
Forgot himself for weal or woe.

Trilled her song and swelled her song
With maiden coy caprice
In a labyrinth of throbs,
Pauses, cadences ;
Clear-noted as a dropping brook,
Soft-noted like the bees,
Wild-noted as the shivering wind
Forlorn through forest-trees :
Love-noted like the wood-pigeon
Who hides herself for love,
Yet cannot keep her secret safe,
But coos and coos thereof :
Thus the notes rang loud or low.

He hung breathless on her breath ;
Speechless, who listened well ;
Could not speak or think or wish
Till silence broke the spell.
Then he spoke, and spread his hands,
Pointing here and there :
'See my sheep and see the lambs,
Twin lambs which they bare.
All myself I offer you,
All my flocks and care,
Your sweet song hath moved me so.'

In her fluttered heart young May
Mused a dubious while :
'If he loves me as he says'—
Her lips curved with a smile :
'Where Margaret shines like the sun
I shine but like a moon ;
If sister Meggan makes her choice
I can make mine as soon ;
At cockcrow we were sister-maids,
We may be brides at noon.'
Said Meggan 'Yes' ; May said not 'No.'

Fair Margaret stayed alone at home ;
Awhile she sang her song,
Awhile sat silent, then she thought
'My sisters loiter long.'
That sultry noon had waned away,
Shadows had waxen great :
'Surely,' she thought within herself,
'My sisters loiter late.'
She rose, and peered out at the door,
With patient heart to wait,
And heard a distant nightingale
Complaining of its mate ;
Then down the garden slope she walked,
Down to the garden gate,
Leaned on the rail and waited so.

The slope was lightened by her eyes
Like summer lightning fair,
Like rising of the haloed moon
Lightened her glimmering hair,
While her face lightened like the sun
Whose dawn is rosy white.
Thus crowned with maiden majesty
She peered into the night,
Looked up the hill and down the hill,
To left hand and to right,
Flashing like fire-flies to and fro.

Waiting thus in weariness
She marked the nightingale
Telling, if any one would heed,
Its old complaining tale.
Then lifted she her voice and sang,
Answering the bird :
Then lifted she her voice and sang ;
Such notes were never heard
From any bird when Spring's in blow.

The king of all that country,
Coursing far, coursing near,
Curbed his amber-bitted steed,
Coursed amain to hear ;
All his princes in his train,
Squire and knight and peer,
With his crown upon his head,
His sceptre in his hand,
Down he fell at Margaret's knees
Lord king of all that land,
To her highness bending low.

Every beast and bird and fish
Came mustering to the sound,
Every man and every maid
From miles of country round :
Meggan on her herdsman's arm,
With her shepherd May,
Flocks and herds trooped at their heels
Along the hill-side way ;

No foot too feeble for the ascent,
Not any head too grey;
Some were swift and none were slow.

So Margaret sang her sisters home
In their marriage mirth;
Sang free birds out of the sky,
Beasts along the earth,
Sang up fishes of the deep—
All breathing things that move—
Sang from far and sang from near
To her lovely love;
Sang together friend and foe;

Sang a golden-bearded king
Straightway to her feet,
Sang him silent where he knelt
In eager anguish sweet.
But when the clear voice died away,
When longest echoes died,
He stood up like a royal man
And claimed her for his bride.
So three maids were wooed and won
In a brief May-tide,
Long ago and long ago.

6 *July* 1863.

'THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN'

'Mid the rose of keenest thorn!
The hidden summer morn
Under the rose I was born.

Do not guess his name
Who wrought my Mother's shame,
And gave me life forlorn;
But my Mother, Mother, Mother,
Know her from all other.
My Mother pale and mild,
Fair as ever was seen,

She was but scarce sixteen,
Little more than a child,
When I was born
To work her scorn.
With secret bitter throes,
In a passion of secret woes,
She bore me under the rose.

One who my Mother nursed
Took me from the first:—
'O nurse, let me look upon
This babe that costs so dear;
To-morrow she will be gone:
Other mothers may keep
Their babes awake and asleep,
But I must not keep her here.'—
Whether I know or guess,
I know this not the less.

So I was sent away
That none might spy the truth:
And my childhood waxed to youth
And I left off childish play.
I never cared to play
With the village boys and girls;
And I think they thought me proud,
I found so little to say
And kept so from the crowd:
But I had the longest curls
And I had the largest eyes,
And my teeth were small like pearls.
The girls might flout and scout me,
But the boys would hang about me,
In sheepish mooning wise.

Our one-street village stood
A long mile from the town,
A mile of windy down
And bleak one-sided wood,
With not a single house.
Our town itself was small,
With just the common shops,
And throve in its small way.
Our neighbouring gentry reared

The good old-fashioned crops,
And made old-fashioned boasts
Of what John Bull would do
If Frenchman Frog appeared,
And drank old-fashioned toasts,
And made old-fashioned bows
To my Lady at the Hall.

My Lady at the Hall
Is grander than they all:
Hers is the oldest name
In all the neighbourhood;
But the race must die with her
Though she's a lofty dame,
For she's unmarried still.
Poor people say she's good,
And has an open hand
As any in the land,
And she's the comforter
Of many sick and sad;
My nurse once said to me
That everything she had
Came of my Lady's bounty:
'Though she's greatest in the county
She's humble to the poor,—
No beggar seeks her door
But finds help presently.
I pray both night and day
For her, and you must pray:
But she'll never feel distress
If needy folk can bless.'

I was a little maid
When here we came to live
From somewhere by the sea.
Men spoke a foreign tongue
There where we used to be
When I was merry and young,
Too young to feel afraid;
The fisher folk would give
A kind strange word to me,
There by the foreign sea:
I don't know where it was,
But I remember still
Our cottage on a hill,
And fields of flowering grass
On that fair foreign shore.

I liked my old home best,
But this was pleasant too:
So here we made our nest
And here I grew.
And now and then my Lady
In riding past our door
Would nod to Nurse and speak,
Or stoop and pat my cheek;
And I was always ready
To hold the field-gate wide
For my Lady to go through;
My Lady in her veil
So seldom put aside,
My Lady grave and pale.

I often sat to wonder
Who might my parents be,
For I knew of something under
My simple-seeming state.
Nurse never talked to me
Of mother or of father,
But watched me early and late
With kind suspicious cares:
Or not suspicious, rather
Anxious, as if she knew
Some secret I might gather
And smart for unawares.
Thus I grew.

But Nurse waxed old and grey,
Bent and weak with years.
There came a certain day
That she lay upon her bed,
Shaking her palsied head,
With words she gasped to say
Which had to stay unsaid.
Then with a jerking hand
Held out so piteously
She gave a ring to me
Of gold wrought curiously,—

A ring which she had worn
Since the day that I was born,
She once had said to me.
I slipped it on my finger;
Her eyes were keen to linger
On my hand that slipped it on;
Then she sighed one rattling sigh
And stared on with sightless eye:—
The one who loved me was gone.

How long I stayed alone
With the corpse I never knew,
For I fainted dead as stone.
When I came to life once more
I was down upon the floor,
With neighbours making ado
To bring me back to life.
I heard the sexton's wife
Say: 'Up, my lad, and run
To tell it at the Hall;
She was my Lady's nurse,
And done can't be undone:
I'll watch by this poor lamb.
I guess my Lady's purse
Is always open to such:
I'd run up on my crutch
A cripple as I am,'
(For cramps had vexed her much)
'Rather than this dear heart
Lack one to take her part.'

For days day after day
On my weary bed I lay
Wishing the time would pass;
Oh so wishing that I was
Likely to pass away:
For the one friend whom I knew
Was dead, I knew no other,
Neither father nor mother;
And I, what should I do?

One day the sexton's wife
Said: 'Rouse yourself, my dear:
My Lady has driven down
From the Hall into the town,
And we think she's coming here.
Cheer up, for life is life.'

But I would not look or speak,
Would not cheer up at all.
My tears were like to fall;
So I turned round to the wall
And hid my hollow cheek,
Making as if I slept,
As silent as a stone,
And no one knew I wept.
What was my Lady to me,
The grand lady from the Hall?
She might come, or stay away,
I was sick at heart that day:
The whole world seemed to be
Nothing, just nothing to me,
For aught that I could see.

Yet I listened where I lay.
A bustle came below,
A clear voice said: 'I know:
I will see her first alone,
It may be less of a shock
If she's so weak to-day.'—
A light hand turned the lock,
A light step crossed the floor,
One sat beside my bed:
But never a word she said.

For me, my shyness grew
Each moment more and more:
So I said never a word,
And neither looked nor stirred;
I think she must have heard
My heart go pit-a-pat:
Thus I lay, my Lady sat,
More than a mortal hour—
(I counted one and two
By the house-clock while I lay):
I seemed to have no power
To think of a thing to say,

Or do what I ought to do,
Or rouse myself to a choice.

At last she said: 'Margaret,
Won't you even look at me?'
A something in her voice
Forced my tears to fall at last,
Forced sobs from me thick and fast;
Something not of the past,
Yet stirring memory;
A something new, and yet
Not new, too sweet to last,
Which I never can forget.

I turned and stared at her:
Her cheek showed hollow-pale;
Her hair like mine was fair,
A wonderful fall of hair
That screened her like a veil;
But her height was statelier,
Her eyes had depth more deep:
I think they must have had
Always a something sad,
Unless they were asleep.

While I stared, my Lady took
My hand in her spare hand
Jewelled and soft and grand,
And looked with a long long look
Of hunger in my face;
As if she tried to trace
Features she ought to know,
And half hoped, half feared, to find.
Whatever was in her mind,
She heaved a sigh at last,
And began to talk to me.

'Your nurse was my dear nurse,
And her nursling's dear,' said she:
'No one told me a word
Of her getting worse and worse,
Till her poor life was past'
(Here my Lady's tears dropped fast).
'I might have been with her,
I might have promised and heard,
But she had no comforter.
She might have told me much
Which now I shall never know,
Never never shall know.'
She sat by me sobbing so,
And seemed so woe-begone,
That I laid one hand upon
Hers with a timid touch,
Scarce thinking what I did,
Not knowing what to say:
That moment her face was hid
In the pillow close by mine,
Her arm was flung over me,
She hugged me, sobbing so
As if her heart would break,
And kissed me where I lay.

After this she often came
To bring me fruit or wine
Or sometimes hothouse flowers;
And at nights I lay awake
Often and often thinking
What to do for her sake.
Wet or dry it was the same:
She would come in at all hours,
Set me eating and drinking
And say I must grow strong;
At last the day seemed long,
And home seemed scarcely home,
If she did not come.

Well, I grew strong again:
In time of primroses,
I went to pluck them in the lane;
In time of nestling birds,
I heard them chirping round the house;
And all the herds
Were out at grass when I grew strong,
And days were waxen long,
And there was work for bees
Among the May-bush boughs,
And I had shot up tall,
And life felt after all

Pleasant, and not so long,
When I grew strong.

I was going to the Hall
To be my Lady's maid :
'Her little friend,' she said to me,
'Almost her child,'
She said and smiled,
Sighing painfully ;
Blushing, with a second flush
As if she blushed to blush.

Friend, servant, child : just this
My standing at the Hall ;
The other servants call me 'Miss,'
My Lady calls me 'Margaret,'
With her clear voice musical.
She never chides when I forget
This or that ; she never chides.
Except when people come to stay
(And that's not often) at the Hall,
I sit with her all day
And ride out when she rides.
She sings to me and makes me sing ;
Sometimes I read to her,
Sometimes we merely sit and talk.
She noticed once my ring
And made me tell its history ;
That evening in our garden walk
She said she should infer
The ring had been my father's first,
Then my mother's, given for me
To the nurse who nursed
My mother in her misery,
That so quite certainly
Some one might know me, who . . .
Then she was silent, and I too.

I hate when people come :
The women speak and stare
And mean to be so civil.
This one will stroke my hair,
That one will pat my cheek
And praise my Lady's kindness,
Expecting me to speak ;
I like the proud ones best
Who sit as struck with blindness,
As if I wasn't there.
But if any gentleman
Is staying at the Hall
(Though few come prying here),
My Lady seems to fear
Some downright dreadful evil,
And makes me keep my room
As closely as she can :
So I hate when people come,
It is so troublesome.
In spite of all her care,
Sometimes to keep alive
I sometimes do contrive
To get out in the grounds
For a whiff of wholesome air,
Under the rose you know :
It's charming to break bounds,
Stolen waters are sweet,
And what's the good of feet
If for days they mustn't go ?
Give me a longer tether,
Or I may break from it.

Now I have eyes and ears,
And just some little wit.
'Almost my Lady's child ;'
I recollect she smiled,
Sighed and blushed together.
Then her story of the ring
Sounds not improbable ;
She told it me so well
It seemed the actual thing.—
Oh keep your counsel close :
But I guess under the rose,
In long past summer weather
When the world was blossoming
And the rose upon its thorn—
I guess not who he was
Flawed honour like a glass,
And made my life forlorn ;
But my Mother, Mother, Mother,
Oh I know her from all other.

My Lady, you might trust
Your daughter with your fame.
Trust me, I would not shame
Our honourable name,
For I have noble blood
Though I was bred in dust
And brought up in the mud.
I will not press my claim,
Just leave me where you will:
But you might trust your daughter,
For blood is thicker than water
And you're my mother still.

So my Lady holds her own
With condescending grace,
And fills her lofty place
With an untroubled face
As a queen may fill a throne.
While I could hint a tale—
(But then I am her child)—
Would make her quail;
Would set her in the dust,
Lorn with no comforter,
Her glorious hair defiled
And ashes on her cheek:
The decent world would thrust
Its finger out at her,
Not much displeased I think
To make a nine days' stir;
The decent world would sink
Its voice to speak of her.

Now this is what I mean
To do, no more, no less:
Never to speak, or show
Bare sign of what I know.
Let the blot pass unseen;
Yea, let her never guess
I hold the tangled clue
She huddles out of view.
Friend, servant, almost child—
So be it and nothing more
On this side of the grave.

Mother, in Paradise
You'll see with clearer eyes;
Perhaps in this world even
When you are like to die
And face to face with Heaven
You'll drop for once the lie:
But you must drop the mask, not I

My Lady promises
Two hundred pounds with me
Whenever I may wed
A man she can approve:
And since besides her bounty
I'm fairest in the county
(For so I've heard it said,
Though I don't vouch for this),
Her promised pounds may move
Some honest man to see
My virtues and my beauties;
Perhaps the rising grazier,
Or temperance publican,
May claim my wifely duties.
Meanwhile I wait their leisure
And grace-bestowing pleasure,
I wait the happy man;
But if I hold my head
And pitch my expectations
Just higher than their level,
They must fall back on patience.
I may not mean to wed,
Yet I'll be civil.

Now sometimes in a dream
My heart goes out of me
To build and scheme,
Till I sob after things that seem
So pleasant in a dream:
A home such as I see
My blessed neighbours live in
With father and with mother,
All proud of one another,
Named by one common name
From baby in the bud
To full-blown workman Father;

It's little short of Heaven.
I'd give my gentle blood
To wash my special shame
And drown my private grudge.
I'd toil and moil much rather,
The dingiest cottage drudge
Whose mother need not blush,
Than live here like a lady
And see my Mother flush
And hear her voice unsteady
Sometimes, yet never dare
Ask to share her care.

Of course the servants sneer
Behind my back at me;
Of course the village girls,
Who envy me my curls
And gowns and idleness,
Take comfort in a jeer;
Of course the ladies guess
Just so much of my history
As points the emphatic stress
With which they laud my Lady.
The gentlemen who catch
A casual glimpse of me
And turn again to see,
Their valets on the watch
To speak a word with me,
All know and sting me wild;
Till I am almost ready
To wish that I were dead—
No faces more to see,
No more words to be said,
My Mother safe at last
Disburdened of her child,
And the past past.

'All equal before God'—
Our Rector has it so,
And sundry sleepers nod.
It may be so; I know
All are not equal here,
And when the sleepers wake
They make a difference.

'All equal in the grave'—
That shows an obvious sense:
Yet something which I crave
Not death itself brings near;
How should death half atone
For all my past, or make
The name I bear my own?

I love my dear old Nurse
Who loved me without gains;
I love my mistress even,
Friend, Mother, what you will.
But I could almost curse
My Father for his pains;
And sometimes at my prayer
Kneeling in sight of Heaven
I almost curse him still:
Why did he set his snare
To catch at unaware
My Mother's foolish youth,—
Load me with shame that's hers,
And her with something worse,
A lifelong lie for truth?

I think my mind is fixed
On one point and made up:
To accept my lot unmixed;
Never to drug the cup
But drink it by myself.
I'll not be wooed for pelf;
I'll not blot out my shame
With any man's good name;
But nameless as I stand,
My hand is my own hand,
And nameless as I came
I go to the dark land.

'All equal in the grave'—
I bide my time till then:
'All equal before God'—
To-day I feel His rod,
To-morrow He may save.
Amen.

March 1865.

THE MONTHS:

A PAGEANT.

PERSONIFICATIONS.

Boys.	*Girls.*
JANUARY.	FEBRUARY.
MARCH.	APRIL.
JULY.	MAY.
AUGUST.	JUNE.
OCTOBER.	SEPTEMBER.
DECEMBER.	NOVEMBER.

ROBIN REDBREASTS; LAMBS AND SHEEP; NIGHTINGALE AND NESTLINGS.

Various Flowers, Fruits, etc.

Scene: A COTTAGE WITH ITS GROUNDS.

[A room in a large comfortable cottage; a fire burning on the hearth; a table on which the breakfast things have been left standing. January discovered seated by the fire.]

JANUARY.

COLD the day and cold the drifted snow,
Dim the day until the cold dark night.
[Stirs the fire.
Crackle, sparkle, faggot; embers glow:
Some one may be plodding through the snow
Longing for a light,
For the light that you and I can show.
If no one else should come,
Here Robin Redbreast's welcome to a crumb,
And never troublesome:
Robin, why don't you come and fetch your crumb?

Here's butter for my hunch of bread,
And sugar for your crumb;
Here's room upon the hearthrug,
If you'll only come.
In your scarlet waistcoat,
With your keen bright eye,
Where are you loitering?
Wings were made to fly!

Make haste to breakfast,
Come and fetch your crumb,
For I'm as glad to see you
As you are glad to come.

[Two Robin Redbreasts are seen tapping with their beaks at the lattice, which January opens. The birds flutter in, hop about the floor, and peck up the crumbs and sugar thrown to them. They have scarcely finished their meal when a knock is heard at the door. January hangs a guard in front of the fire, and opens to February, who appears with a bunch of snowdrops in her hand.]

Good-morrow, sister.

FEBRUARY.

Brother, joy to you!
I've brought some snowdrops; only just a few,
But quite enough to prove the world awake,
Cheerful and hopeful in the frosty dew
And for the pale sun's sake.

[She hands a few of her snowdrops to January, who retires into the background. While February stands arranging the remaining snowdrops in a glass of water on the window-sill, a soft butting and bleating are heard outside. She opens the door, and sees one foremost lamb, with other sheep and lambs bleating and crowding towards her.]

O you, you little wonder, come—come in,
You wonderful, you woolly soft white lamb:

u panting mother ewe, come too,
d lead that tottering twin
e in:
ng all your bleating kith and kin,
cept the horny ram.

bruary opens a second door in the back-round, and the little flock files through nto a warm and sheltered compartment ut of sight.]

e lambkin tottering in its walk
With just a fleece to wear;
e snowdrop drooping on its stalk
So slender,—
owdrop and lamb, a pretty pair,
aving the cold for our delight,
Both white,
Both tender.

attling of doors and windows; branches een without, tossing violently to and ro.]

w the doors rattle, and the branches
sway!
re's brother March comes whirling
on his way
th winds that eddy and sing:—

e turns the handle of the door, which ursts open, and discloses March hasten-ng up, both hands full of violets and nemones.]

ne, show me what you bring;
I have said my say, fulfilled my
day,
l must away.

MARCH

[Stopping short on the threshold.]

I blow an arouse
Through the world's wide house
o quicken the torpid earth:
Grappling I fling
Each feeble thing,
ut bring strong life to the birth.

I wrestle and frown,
And topple down;
I wrench, I rend, I uproot;
Yet the violet
Is born where I set
The sole of my flying foot,

[Hands violets and anemones to February, who retires into the background.]

And in my wake
Frail wind-flowers quake,
And the catkins promise fruit.
I drive ocean ashore
With rush and roar,
And he cannot say me nay:
My harpstrings all
Are the forests tall,
Making music when I play.
And as others perforce,
So I on my course
Run and needs must run,
With sap on the mount
And buds past count
And rivers and clouds and sun,
With seasons and breath
And time and death
And all that has yet begun.

[Before March has done speaking, a voice is heard approaching accompanied by a twittering of birds. April comes along singing, and stands outside and out of sight to finish her song.]

APRIL

[Outside.]

Pretty little three
Sparrows in a tree,
Light upon the wing;
Though you cannot sing
You can chirp of Spring:
Chirp of Spring to me,
Sparrows, from your tree.

Never mind the showers,
Chirp about the flowers
While you build a nest:
Straws from east and west,
Feathers from your breast,
Make the snuggest bowers
In a world of flowers.

You must dart away
From the chosen spray,
You intrusive third
Extra little bird;
Join the unwedded herd!
These have done with play,
And must work to-day.

[Appearing at the open door.]

Good-morrow and good-bye: if others fly,
Of all the flying months you're the most flying.

MARCH.

You're hope and sweetness, April.

APRIL.

Birth means dying,
As wings and wind mean flying;
So you and I and all things fly or die;
And sometimes I sit sighing to think of dying.
But meanwhile I've a rainbow in my showers,
And a lapful of flowers,
And these dear nestlings aged three hours;
And here's their mother sitting;
Their father's merely flitting
To find their breakfast somewhere in my bowers.

[As she speaks April shows March her apron full of flowers and nest full of birds. March wanders away into the grounds. April, without entering the cottage, hangs over the hungry nestlings watching them.]

What beaks you have, you funny things,
What voices shrill and weak;
Who'd think that anything that sings
Could sing through such a beak?
Yet you'll be nightingales one day,
And charm the country side,
When I'm away and far away
And May is queen and bride.

[May arrives unperceived by April, and gives her a kiss. April starts and looks round.]

Ah May, good-morrow, May, and so good-bye.

MAY.

That's just your way, sweet April, smile and sigh:
Your sorrow's half in fun,
Begun and done
And turned to joy while twenty seconds run.
I've gathered flowers all as I came along,
At every step a flower
Fed by your last bright shower,—

[She divides an armful of all sorts of flowers with April, who strolls away through the garden.]

And gathering flowers I listened to the song
Of every bird in bower.

The world and I are far too full of bliss

To think or plan or toil or care;
The sun is waxing strong,
The days are waxing long,
And all that is
Is fair.

Here are my buds of lily and of rose,
And here's my namesake blossom may;
And from a watery spot
See here forget-me-not,
With all that blows
To-day.

Hark to my linnets from the hedges green,
Blackbird and lark and thrush and dove,
And every nightingale
And cuckoo tells its tale,
And all they mean
Is love.

[June appears at the further end of the garden, coming slowly towards May, who, seeing her, exclaims]

Surely you're come too early, sister June.

JUNE.

Indeed I feel as if I came too soon
To round your young May moon
And set the world a-gasping at my noon.
Yet come I must. So here are strawberries
Sun-flushed and sweet, as many as you please;
And here are full-blown roses by the score,
More roses, and yet more.

[May, eating strawberries, withdraws among the flower beds.]

The sun does all my long day's work for me,
Raises and ripens everything;
I need but sit beneath a leafy tree
And watch and sing.

[Seats herself in the shadow of a laburnum.]

Or if I'm lulled by note of bird and bee,
Or lulled by noontide's silence deep,
I need but nestle down beneath my tree
And drop asleep.

[June falls asleep; and is not awakened by the voice of July, who behind the scenes is heard half singing, half calling.]

JULY

[Behind the scenes.]

Blue flags, yellow flags, flags all freckled,
Which will you take? yellow, blue, speckled!
Take which you will, speckled, blue, yellow,
Each in its way has not a fellow.

[Enter July, a basket of many-coloured irises slung upon his shoulders, a bunch of ripe grass in one hand, and a plate piled full of peaches balanced upon the other. He steals up to June, and tickles her with the grass. She wakes.]

JUNE.

What, here already?

JULY.

Nay, my tryst is kept;
The longest day slipped by you while you slept.
I've brought you one curved pyramid of bloom,

[Hands her the plate.]

Not flowers but peaches, gathered where the bees,
As downy, bask and boom
In sunshine and in gloom of trees.
But get you in, a storm is at my heels;
The whirlwind whistles and wheels,
Lightning flashes and thunder peals,
Flying and following hard upon my heels.

[June takes shelter in a thickly-woven arbour.]

The roar of a storm sweeps up
From the east to the lurid west,
The darkening sky, like a cup,
Is filled with rain to the brink;
The sky is purple and fire,
Blackness and noise and unrest;
The earth, parched with desire,
Opens her mouth to drink.

Send forth thy thunder and fire,
Turn over thy brimming cup,
O sky, appease the desire
Of earth in her parched unrest;
Pour out drink to her thirst,
Her famishing life lift up;
Make thyself fair as at first,
With a rainbow for thy crest.

Have done with thunder and fire,
O sky with the rainbow crest;
O earth, have done with desire,
Drink, and drink deep, and rest.

[Enter August, carrying a sheaf made up of different kinds of grain.]

Hail, brother August, flushed and warm
And scatheless from my storm.
Your hands are full of corn, I see,
As full as hands can be:
And earth and air both smell as sweet as balm
In their recovered calm,
And that they owe to me.

[July retires into a shrubbery.]

AUGUST.

Wheat sways heavy, oats are airy,
Barley bows a graceful head,
Short and small shoots up canary,
Each of these is some one's bread;
Bread for man or bread for beast,
Or at very least
A bird's savoury feast.

Men are brethren of each other,
One in flesh and one in food;
And a sort of foster-brother
Is the litter or the brood
Of that folk in fur or feather
Who, with men together,
Breast the wind and weather.

[August descries September toiling across the lawn.]

My harvest home is ended; and I spy
September drawing nigh
With the first thought of Autumn in her eye,
And the first sigh
Of Autumn wind among her locks that fly.

[September arrives, carrying upon her head a basket heaped high with fruit.]

SEPTEMBER.

Unload me, brother. I have brought a few
Plums and these pears for you,
A dozen kinds of apples, one or two
Melons, some figs all bursting through

Their skins, and pearled with dew
These damsons violet-blue.

[While September is speaking, August lifts the basket to the ground, selects various fruits, and withdraws slowly along the gravel walk, eating a pear as he goes.]

My song is half a sigh
Because my green leaves die;
Sweet are my fruits, but all my leaves are dying;
And well may Autumn sigh,
And well may I
Who watch the sere leaves flying.

My leaves that fade and fall,
I note you one and all;
I call you, and the Autumn wind is calling,
Lamenting for your fall,
And for the pall
You spread on earth in falling.

And here's a song of flowers to suit such hours:
A song of the last lilies, the last flowers,
Amid my withering bowers.

In the sunny garden bed
Lilies look so pale,
Lilies droop the head
In the shady grassy vale;
If all alike they pine
In shade and in shine,
If everywhere they grieve,
Where will lilies live?

[October enters briskly, some leafy twigs bearing different sorts of nuts in one hand, and a long ripe hop-bine trailing after him from the other. A dahlia is stuck in his buttonhole.]

OCTOBER.

Nay, cheer up sister. Life is not quite over,
Even if the year has done with corn and clover,
With flowers and leaves; besides, in fact it's true,
Some leaves remain and some flowers too
For me and you.
Now see my crops:

[Offering his produce to September.]

I've brought you nuts and hops;
And when the leaf drops, why, the walnut drops.

[October wreathes the hop-bine about September's neck, and gives her the nut twigs. They enter the cottage together, but without shutting the door. She steps into the background: he advances to the hearth, removes the guard, stirs up the smouldering fire, and arranges several chestnuts ready to roast.]

Crack your first nut and light your first fire,
Roast your first chestnut crisp on the bar;
Make the logs sparkle, stir the blaze higher,
Logs are cheery as sun or as star,
Logs we can find wherever we are.

Spring one soft day will open the leaves,
Spring one bright day will lure back the flowers;
Never fancy my whistling wind grieves,
Never fancy I've tears in my showers:
Dance, nights and days! and dance on, my hours!

[Sees November approaching.]

Here comes my youngest sister, looking dim
And grim,
With dismal ways.
What cheer, November?

NOVEMBER

[Entering and shutting the door.]

Nought have I to bring,
Tramping a-chill and shivering,
Except these pine-cones for a blaze,—
Except a fog which follows,
And stuffs up all the hollows,—
Except a hoar frost here and there,—
Except some shooting stars
Which dart their luminous cars
Trackless and noiseless through the keen night air.

[October, shrugging his shoulders, withdraws into the background, while November throws her pine-cones on the fire, and sits down listlessly.]

The earth lies fast asleep, grown tired
Of all that's high or deep;
There's nought desired and nought required
Save a sleep.
I rock the cradle of the earth,
I lull her with a sigh;
And know that she will wake to mirth
By and by.

[Through the window December is seen running and leaping in the direction of the door. He knocks.]

Ah, here's my youngest brother come at last:

[Calls out without rising.]

Come in, December.

[He opens the door and enters, loaded with evergreens in berry, etc.]

Come, and shut the door,
For now it's snowing fast;
It snows, and will snow more and more;
Don't let it drift in on the floor.
But you, you're all aglow; how can you be
Rosy and warm and smiling in the cold?

DECEMBER.

Nay, no closed doors for me,
But open doors and open hearts and glee
To welcome young and old.

Dimmest and brightest month am I;
My short days end, my lengthening days begin;
What matters more or less sun in the sky,
When all is sun within?

[He begins making a wreath as he sings.]

Ivy and privet dark as night,
I weave with hips and haws a cheerful show,
And holly for a beauty and delight,
And milky mistletoe.

While high above them all I set
Yew twigs and Christmas roses pure and pale;
Then Spring her snowdrop and her violet
May keep, so sweet and frail;

May keep each merry singing bird,
Of all her happy birds that singing build:

or I've a carol which some shepherds heard
Once in a wintry field.

While December concludes his song all the other Months troop in from the garden, or advance out of the background. The Twelve join hands in a circle, and begin dancing round to a stately measure as the Curtain falls.]

Summer 1879.

A BALLAD OF BODING

HERE are sleeping dreams and waking dreams;
What seems is not always as it seems.

I looked out of my window in the sweet new morning,
And there I saw three barges of manifold adorning
Went sailing toward the East:
The first had sails like fire,
The next like glittering wire,
But sackcloth were the sails of the least;
And all the crews made music, and two had spread a feast.

The first choir breathed in flutes,
And fingered soft guitars;
The second won from lutes
Harmonious chords and jars,
With drums for stormy bars:
But the third was all of harpers and scarlet trumpeters;
Notes of triumph, then
In alarm again,
As for onset, as for victory, rallies, stirs,
Peace at last and glory to the vanquishers.

The first barge showed for figurehead a Love with wings;
The second showed for figurehead a Worm with stings;
The third, a Lily tangled to a Rose which clings.
The first bore for freight gold and spice and down;
The second bore a sword, a sceptre, and a crown;
The third, a heap of earth gone to dust and brown.
Winged Love meseemed like Folly in the face;
Stinged Worm meseemed loathly in his place;
Lily and Rose were flowers of grace.

Merry went the revel of the fire-sailed crew,
Singing, feasting, dancing to and fro:
Pleasures ever changing, ever graceful, ever new;
Sighs, but scarce of woe;
All the sighing
Wooed such sweet replying;
All the sighing, sweet and low,
Used to come and go
For more pleasure, merely so.
Yet at intervals some one grew tired
Of everything desired,
And sank, I knew not whither, in sorry plight,
Out of sight.

The second crew seemed ever
Wider-visioned, graver,
More distinct of purpose, more sustained of will;
With heads erect and proud,
And voices sometimes loud;
With endless tacking, counter-tacking,

All things grasping, all things lacking,
It would seem ;
Ever shifting helm, or sail, or shroud,
Drifting on as in a dream.
Hoarding to their utmost bent,
Feasting to their fill,
Yet gnawed by discontent,
Envy, hatred, malice, on their road they went.
Their freight was not a treasure,
Their music not a pleasure ;
The sword flashed, cleaving through their bands,
Sceptre and crown changed hands.

The third crew as they went
Seemed mostly different ;
They toiled in rowing, for to them the wind was contrary,
As all the world might see.
They laboured at the oar,
While on their heads they bore
The fiery stress of sunshine more and more.
They laboured at the oar hand-sore,
Till rain went splashing,
And spray went dashing,
Down on them, and up on them, more and more.
Their sails were patched and rent,
Their masts were bent,
In peril of their lives they worked and went.
For them no feast was spread,
No soft luxurious bed
Scented and white,
No crown or sceptre hung in sight ;
In weariness and painfulness,
In thirst and sore distress,
They rowed and steered from left to right
With all their might.
Their trumpeters and harpers round about
Incessantly played out,
And sometimes they made answer with a shout ;
But oftener they groaned or wept,
And seldom paused to eat, and seldom slept.
I wept for pity watching them, but more
I wept heart-sore
Once and again to see
Some weary man plunge overboard, and swim
To Love or Worm ship floating buoyantly :
And there all welcomed him.

The ships steered each apart and seemed to scorn each other,
Yet all the crews were interchangeable ;
Now one man, now another,—
Like bloodless spectres some, some flushed by health,—
Changed openly, or changed by stealth,
Scaling a slippery side, and scaled it well.
The most left Love ship, hauling wealth
Up Worm ship's side ;
While some few hollow-eyed
Left either for the sack-sailed boat ;
But this, though not remote,
Was worst to mount, and whoso left it once
Scarce ever came again,
But seemed to loathe his erst companions,
And wish and work them bane.

Then I knew (I know not how) there lurked quicksands full of dread,

Rocks and reefs and whirlpools in
the water bed,
Whence a waterspout
Instantaneously leaped out,
Roaring as it reared its head.
Soon I spied a something dim
Many-handed, grim,
That went flitting to and fro the first
and second ship ;
It puffed their sails full out
With puffs of smoky breath
From a smouldering lip,
And cleared the waterspout
Which reeled roaring round about
Threatening death.
With a horny hand it steered,
And a horn appeared
On its sneering head upreared
Haughty and high
Against the blackening lowering sky.
With a hoof it swayed the waves ;
They opened here and there,
Till I spied deep open graves
Full of skeletons
That were men and women once
Soul or fair ;
Full of things that creep
And fester in the deep
And never breathe the clean life-
nurturing air.

The third bark held aloof
From the Monster with the hoof,
Despite his urgent beck,
And fraught with guile
Abominable his smile ;
Till I saw him take a flying leap on
to that deck.
Then full of awe,
With these same eyes I saw
His head incredible retract its horn
Sounding like babe's new born,
While silvery phosphorescence played
About his dis-horned head.

The sneer smoothed from his lip,
He beamed blandly on the ship ;
All winds sank to a moan,
All waves to a monotone
(For all these seemed his realm),
While he laid a strong caressing
hand upon the helm.

Then a cry well nigh of despair
Shrieked to heaven, a clamour of
desperate prayer.
The harpers harped no more,
While the trumpeters sounded sore,
An alarm to wake the dead from
their bed :
To the rescue, to the rescue, now
or never,
To the rescue, O ye living, O ye dead,
Or no more help or hope for ever!—
The planks strained as though they
must part asunder,
The masts bent as though they must
dip under,
And the winds and the waves at length
Girt up their strength,
And the depths were laid bare,
And heaven flashed fire and volleyed
thunder
Through the rain-choked air,
And sea and sky seemed to kiss
In the horror and the hiss
Of the whole world shuddering every-
where.

Lo! a Flyer swooping down
With wings to span the globe,
And splendour for his robe
And splendour for his crown.
He lighted on the helm with a foot
of fire,
And spun the Monster overboard :
And that monstrous thing abhorred,
Gnashing with balked desire,
Wriggled like a worm infirm

Up the Worm
Of the loathly figurehead.
There he crouched and gnashed;
And his head re-horned, and gashed
From the other's grapple, dripped
bloody red.

I saw that thing accurst
Wreak his worst
On the first and second crew:
Some with baited hook
He angled for and took,
Some dragged overboard in a net
he threw;
Some he did to death
With hoof or horn or blasting breath.

I heard a voice of wailing
Where the ships went sailing,
A sorrowful voice prevailing
Above the sound of the sea,
Above the singers' voices,
And musical merry noises;
All songs had turned to sighing,
The light was failing,
The day was dying—
Ah me
That such a sorrow should be!

There was sorrow on the sea and
sorrow on the land
When Love ship went down by the
bottomless quicksand
To its grave in the bitter wave.
There was sorrow on the sea and
sorrow on the land
When Worm ship went to pieces on
the rock-bound strand,
And the bitter wave was its grave.
But land and sea waxed hoary
In whiteness of a glory
Never told in story
Nor seen by mortal eye,
When the third ship crossed the bar
Where whirls and breakers are,
And steered into the splendours of
the sky;
That third bark and that least
Which had never seemed to feast,
Yet kept high festival above sun and
moon and star.

Before 1882.

MONNA INNOMINATA

A SONNET OF SONNETS

BEATRICE, immortalized by 'altissimo poeta . . . cotanto amante'; Laura, celebrated by a great though an inferior bard, —have alike paid the exceptional penalty of exceptional honour, and have come down to us resplendent with charms, but (at least, to my apprehension) scant of attractiveness.

These heroines of world-wide fame were preceded by a bevy of unnamed ladies, 'donne innominate,' sung by a school of less conspicuous poets; and in that land and that period which gave simultaneous birth to Catholics, to Albigenses, and to Troubadours, one can imagine many a lady as sharing her lover's poetic aptitude, while the barrier between them might be one held sacred by both, yet not such as to render mutual love incompatible with mutual honour.

Had such a lady spoken for herself, the portrait left us might have appeared more tender, if less dignified, than any drawn even by a devoted friend. Or had the Great Poetess of our own day and nation only been unhappy instead of happy, her circumstances would have invited her to bequeath to us, in lieu of the 'Portuguese' Sonnets,' an inimitable 'donna innominata' drawn not from fancy but from feeling, and worthy to occupy a niche beside 'Beatrice and Laura.

I

'Lo dì che han detto a' dolci amici addio.'
DANTE.
'Amor, con quanto sforzo oggi mi vinci!'
PETRARCA.

COME back to me, who wait and
watch for you:—

Or come not yet, for it is over then,
And long it is before you come again,
far between my pleasures are and few.
ıile, when you come not, what I do I do
Thinking 'Now when he comes,' my sweetest 'when':
For one man is my world of all the men
is wide world holds; O love, my world is you.
wbeit, to meet you grows almost a pang
Because the pang of parting comes so soon;
My hope hangs waning, waxing, like a moon
Between the heavenly days on which we meet:
me, but where are now the songs I sang
When life was sweet because you called them sweet?

2

'a già l'ora che volge il desio.'—DANTE.
'corro al tempo ch' io vi vidi prima.'
PETRARCA.

ish I could remember that first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
mmer or Winter for aught I can say;
unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
at would not blossom yet for many a May.
If only I could recollect it, such
A day of days! I let it come and go
As traceless as a thaw of bygone snow;
It seemed to mean so little, meant so much;
If only now I could recall that touch,
First touch of hand in hand—Did one but know!

3

'O ombre vane, fuor che ne l'aspetto!'
DANTE.

'Immaginata guida la conduce.'
PETRARCA.

I dream of you, to wake: would that I might
Dream of you and not wake but slumber on;
Nor find with dreams the dear companion gone,
As, Summer ended, Summer birds take flight.
In happy dreams I hold you full in sight,
I blush again who waking look so wan;
Brighter than sunniest day that ever shone,
In happy dreams your smile makes day of night.
Thus only in a dream we are at one,
Thus only in a dream we give and take
The faith that maketh rich who take or give;
If thus to sleep is sweeter than to wake,
To die were surely sweeter than to live,
Though there be nothing new beneath the sun.

4

'Poca favilla gran fiamma seconda.'
DANTE.

'Ogni altra cosa, ogni pensier va fore,
E sol ivi con voi rimansi amore.'
PETRARCA.

I loved you first: but afterwards your love,
Outsoaring mine, sang such a loftier song
As drowned the friendly cooings of my dove.
Which owes the other most? My love was long,
And yours one moment seemed to wax more strong;
I loved and guessed at you, you construed me
And loved me for what might or might not be—
Nay, weights and measures do us both a wrong.
For verily love knows not 'mine' or 'thine';
With separate 'I' and 'thou' free love has done,
For one is both and both are one in love:
Rich love knows nought of 'thine that is not mine;'
Both have the strength and both the length thereof,
Both of us, of the love which makes us one.

5

'Amor che a nullo amato amar perdona.'
DANTE.

'Amor m'addusse in sì gioiosa spene.'
PETRARCA.

O my heart's heart, and you who are to me
More than myself myself, God be with you,
Keep you in strong obedience leal and true
To Him whose noble service setteth free;
Give you all good we see or can foresee,
Make your joys many and your sorrows few,
Bless you in what you bear and what you do,
Yea, perfect you as He would have you be.
So much for you; but what for me dear friend?
To love you without stint and all I can,
To-day, to-morrow, world without an end;
To love you much and yet to love you more,
As Jordan at his flood sweeps either shore;
Since woman is the helpmeet made for man.

6

'Or puoi la quantitate
Comprender de l'amor che a te mi scalda.'
DANTE.

'Non vo' che da tal nodo amor mi scioglia.'
PETRARCA.

Trust me, I have not earned your dear rebuke,—
I love, as you would have me, God the most;
Would lose not Him, but you must one be lost,
Nor with Lot's wife cast back a faithless look,
Unready to forego what I forsook;
This say I, having counted up the cost,
This, though I be the feeblest of God's host,

e sorriest sheep Christ shepherds with His crook.
t while I love my God the most, I deem
That I can never love you overmuch ;
I love Him more, so let me love you too ;
Yea, as I apprehend it, love is such
annot love you if I love not Him,
I cannot love Him if I love not you.

7

ui primavera sempre ed ogni frutto.'
DANTE.
agionando con meco ed io con lui.'
PETRARCA.

ove me, for I love you'—and answer me,
'Love me, for I love you': so shall we stand
As happy equals in the flowering land
love, that knows not a dividing sea.
ve builds the house on rock and not on sand,
Love laughs what while the winds rave desperately ;
d who hath found love's citadel unmanned ?
And who hath held in bonds love's liberty ?—
y heart's a coward though my words are brave—
We meet so seldom, yet we surely part
So often ; there's a problem for your art !
Still I find comfort in his Book who saith,
ough jealousy be cruel as the grave,
And death be strong, yet love is strong as death.

8

'Come dicesse a Dio, D'altro non calme.'
DANTE.
'Spero trovar pietà non che perdono.'
PETRARCA.

'I, if I perish, perish'—Esther spake :
And bride of life or death she made her fair
In all the lustre of her perfumed hair
And smiles that kindle longing but to slake.
She put on pomp of loveliness, to take
Her husband through his eyes at unaware ;
She spread abroad her beauty for a snare,
Harmless as doves and subtle as a snake.
She trapped him with one mesh of silken hair,
She vanquished him by wisdom of her wit,
And built her people's house that it should stand :—
If I might take my life so in my hand,
And for my love to Love put up my prayer,
And for love's sake by Love be granted it !

9

'O dignitosa coscienza e netta !'—DANTE.
'Spirto più acceso di virtuti ardenti.'
PETRARCA.

Thinking of you, and all that was, and all
That might have been and now can never be,

I feel your honoured excellence, and see
Myself unworthy of the happier call :
For woe is me who walk so apt to fall,
So apt to shrink afraid, so apt to flee,
Apt to lie down and die (ah woe is me !)
Faithless and hopeless turning to the wall.
And yet not hopeless quite nor faithless quite,
Because not loveless ; love may toil all night,
But take at morning ; wrestle till the break
Of day, but then wield power with God and man :—
So take I heart of grace as best I can,
Ready to spend and be spent for your sake.

10

'Con miglior corso e con migliore stella.'
DANTE.
'La vita fugge e non s'arresta un' ora.'
PETRARCA.

Time flies, hope flags, life plies a wearied wing ;
Death following hard on life gains ground apace ;
Faith runs with each and rears an eager face,
Outruns the rest, makes light of everything,
Spurns earth, and still finds breath to pray and sing ;
While love ahead of all uplifts his praise,
Still asks for grace and still gives thanks for grace,
Content with all day brings and night will bring.
Life wanes ; and when love folds his wings above
Tired hope, and less we feel his conscious pulse,
Let us go fall asleep, dear friend, in peace :
A little while, and age and sorrow cease ;
A little while, and life reborn annuls
Loss and decay and death, and all is love.

11

'Vien dietro a me e lascia dir le genti.
DANTE.
'Contando i casi della vita nostra.'
PETRARCA.

Many in aftertimes will say of you
'He loved her'—while of me what will they say ?
Not that I loved you more than just in play,
For fashion's sake as idle women do.
Even let them prate ; who know not what we knew
Of love and parting in exceeding pain,
Of parting hopeless here to meet again,
Hopeless on earth, and heaven is out of view.
But by my heart of love laid bare to you,
My love that you can make not void nor vain,
Love that foregoes you but to claim anew
Beyond this passage of the gate of death,
I charge you at the Judgment make it plain
My love of you was life and not a breath.

12

'Amor che ne la mente mi ragiona.'
DANTE.
'Amor vien nel bel viso di costei.'
PETRARCA.

If there be any one can take my place
And make you happy whom I grieve to grieve,
Think not that I can grudge it, but believe
I do commend you to that nobler grace,
That readier wit than mine, that sweeter face;
Yea, since your riches make me rich, conceive
I too am crowned, while bridal crowns I weave,
And thread the bridal dance with jocund pace.
For if I did not love you, it might be
That I should grudge you some one dear delight;
But since the heart is yours that was mine own,
Your pleasure is my pleasure, right my right,
Your honourable freedom makes me free,
And you companioned I am not alone.

13

'E drizzeremo gli occhi al Primo Amore.'
DANTE.
'Ma trovo peso non da le mie braccia.'
PETRARCA.

If I could trust mine own self with your fate,
Shall I not rather trust it in God's hand?
Without Whose Will one lily doth not stand,
Nor sparrow fall at his appointed date;
Who numbereth the innumerable sand,
Who weighs the wind and water with a weight,
To Whom the world is neither small nor great,
Whose knowledge foreknew every plan we planned.
Searching my heart for all that touches you,
I find there only love and love's goodwill
Helpless to help and impotent to do,
Of understanding dull, of sight most dim;
And therefore I commend you back to Him
Whose love your love's capacity can fill.

14

'E la Sua Volontade è nostra pace.'
DANTE.
'Sol con questi pensier, con altre chiome.'
PETRARCA.

Youth gone, and beauty gone if ever there
Dwelt beauty in so poor a face as this;
Youth gone and beauty, what remains of bliss?
I will not bind fresh roses in my hair,
To shame a cheek at best but little fair,—
Leave youth his roses, who can bear a thorn,—
I will not seek for blossoms anywhere,
Except such common flowers as blow with corn.
Youth gone and beauty gone, what doth remain?

The longing of a heart pent up forlorn,
A silent heart whose silence loves and longs;
The silence of a heart which sang its songs
While youth and beauty made a summer morn,
Silence of love that cannot sing again.

Before 1882.

AN OLD-WORLD THICKET

'Una selva oscura.'—DANTE.

AWAKE or sleeping (for I know not which)
I was or was not mazed within a wood
Where every mother-bird brought up her brood
Safe in some leafy niche
Of oak or ash, of cypress or of beech,

Of silvery aspen trembling delicately,
Of plane or warmer-tinted sycomore,
Of elm that dies in secret from the core,
Of ivy weak and free,
Of pines, of all green lofty things that be.

Such birds they seemed as challenged each desire;
Like spots of azure heaven upon the wing,
Like downy emeralds that alight and sing,
Like actual coals on fire,
Like anything they seemed, and everything.

Such mirth they made, such warblings and such chat,
With tongue of music in a well-tuned beak,
They seemed to speak more wisdom than we speak,
To make our music flat
And all our subtlest reasonings wild or weak.

Their meat was nought but flowers like butterflies,
With berries coral-coloured or like gold;
Their drink was only dew, which blossoms hold
Deep where the honey lies;
Their wings and tails were lit by sparkling eyes.

The shade wherein they revelled was a shade
That danced and twinkled to the unseen sun;
Branches and leaves cast shadows one by one,
And all their shadows swayed
In breaths of air that rustled and that played.

A sound of waters neither rose nor sank,
And spread a sense of freshness through the air;
It seemed not here or there, but everywhere,
As if the whole earth drank,
Root fathom-deep and strawberry on its bank.

But I who saw such things as I have said
Was overdone with utter weariness;

And walked in care, as one whom
fears oppress,
Because above his head
ath hangs, or damage, or the
dearth of bread.

ch sore defeat of my defeated life
Faced and outfaced me in that
bitter hour;
And turned to yearning palsy all
my power,
And all my peace to strife,
f stabbing self with keen lack-pity
knife.

eetness of beauty moved me to
despair,
Stung me to anger by its mere
content,
Made me all lonely on that way
I went,
Piled care upon my care,
mmed full my cup, and stripped
me empty and bare:

all that was but showed what
all was not,
But gave clear proof of what
might never be;
Making more destitute my poverty,
And yet more blank my lot,
nd me much sadder by its jubilee.

erefore I sat me down: for where-
fore walk?
nd closed mine eyes: for where-
fore see or hear?
las, I had no shutter to mine ear,
And could not shun the talk
f all rejoicing creatures far or
near.

hout my will I hearkened and I
heard
sleep or waking, for I know not
which),

Till note by note the music
changed its pitch;
Bird ceased to answer bird,
And every wind sighed softly if it
stirred.

The drip of widening waters seemed
to weep,
All fountains sobbed and gurgled
as they sprang,
Somewhere a cataract cried out in
its leap
Sheer down a headlong steep;
High over all cloud-thunders gave
a clang.

Such universal sound of lamentation
I heard and felt, fain not to feel
or hear;
Nought else there seemed but
anguish far and near;
Nought else but all creation
Moaning and groaning wrung by
pain or fear,

Shuddering in the misery of its
doom:
My heart then rose a rebel against
light,
Scouring all earth and heaven
and depth and height,
Ingathering wrath and gloom,
Ingathering wrath to wrath and
night to night.

Ah me, the bitterness of such revolt,
All impotent, all hateful, and all
hate,
That kicks and breaks itself against
the bolt
Of an imprisoning fate,
And vainly shakes, and cannot
shake the gate.

Agony to agony, deep called to deep,
Out of the deep I called of my desire;
My strength was weakness and my heart was fire;
Mine eyes, that would not weep
Or sleep, scaled height and depth, and could not sleep;

The eyes, I mean, of my rebellious soul,
For still my bodily eyes were closed and dark:
A random thing I seemed without a mark,
Racing without a goal,
Adrift upon life's sea without an ark.

More leaden than the actual self of lead
Outer and inner darkness weighed on me.
The tide of anger ebbed. Then fierce and free
Surged full above my head
The moaning tide of helpless misery.

Why should I breathe, whose breath was but a sigh?
Why should I live, who drew such painful breath?
Oh weary work, the unanswerable why!—
Yet I, why should I die,
Who had no hope in life, no hope in death?

Grasses and mosses and the fallen leaf
Make peaceful bed for an indefinite term;
But underneath the grass there gnaws a worm—
Haply, there gnaws a grief—
Both, haply always; not, as now, so brief.

The pleasure I remember, it is past;
The pain I feel is passing passing by;
Thus all the world is passing, and thus I:
All things that cannot last
Have grown familiar, and are born to die.

And being familiar, have so long been borne
That habit trains us not to break but bend:
Mourning grows natural to us who mourn
In foresight of an end,
But that which ends not who shall brave or mend?

Surely the ripe fruits tremble on their bough,
They cling and linger trembling till they drop:
I, trembling, cling to dying life; for how
Face the perpetual Now?
Birthless and deathless, void of start or stop,

Void of repentance, void of hope and fear,
Of possibility, alternative,
Of all that ever made us bear to live
From night to morning here,
Of promise even which has no gift to give.

e wood, and every creature of the wood,
Seemed mourning with me in an undertone;
Soft scattered chirpings and a windy moan,
Trees rustling, where they stood d shivered, showed compassion for my mood.

ge to despair; and now despair had turned
Back to self-pity and mere weariness,
th yearnings like a smouldering fire that burned,
And might grow more or less,
And might die out or wax to white excess.

thout, within me, music seemed to be;
Something not music, yet most musical,
ence and sound in heavenly harmony;
At length a pattering fall
Of feet, a bell, and bleatings, broke through all.

en I looked up. The wood lay in a glow
rom golden sunset and from ruddy sky;
he sun had stooped to earth though once so high;
Had stooped to earth, in slow rm dying loveliness brought near and low.

h water drop made answer to the light,
it up a spark and showed the sun his face;
Soft purple shadows paved the grassy space
And crept from height to height,
From height to loftier height crept up apace.

While opposite the sun a gazing moon
Put on his glory for her coronet,
Kindling her luminous coldness to its noon,
As his great splendour set;
One only star made up her train as yet.

Each twig was tipped with gold, each leaf was edged
And veined with gold from the gold-flooded west;
Each mother-bird, and mate-bird, and unfledged
Nestling, and curious nest,
Displayed a gilded moss or beak or breast.

And filing peacefully between the trees,
Having the moon behind them, and the sun
Full in their meek mild faces, walked at ease
A homeward flock, at peace
With one another and with every one.

A patriarchal ram with tinkling bell
Led all his kin; sometimes one browsing sheep
Hung back a moment, or one lamb would leap
And frolic in a dell;
Yet still they kept together, journeying well,

And bleating, one or other, many or few,
Journeying together toward the sunlit west;
Mild face by face, and woolly breast by breast,
Patient, sun-brightened too,
Still journeying toward the sunset and their rest.

Before 1882.

ALL THY WORKS PRAISE THEE, O LORD

A PROCESSIONAL OF CREATION

All

I ALL-CREATION sing my song of praise
To God Who made me and vouchsafes my days,
And sends me forth by multitudinous ways.

Seraph

I, like my Brethren, burn eternally
With love of Him Who is Love, and loveth me;
The Holy, Holy, Holy Unity.

Cherub

I, with my Brethren, gaze eternally
On Him Who is Wisdom, and Who knoweth me;
The Holy, Holy, Holy Trinity.

All Angels

We rule, we serve, we work, we store His treasure,
Whose vessels are we brimmed with strength and pleasure;
Our joys fulfil, yea, overfill our measure.

Heavens

We float before the Presence Infinite,
We cluster round the Throne in our delight,
Revolving and rejoicing in God's sight.

Firmament

I, blue and beautiful, and framed of air,
At sunrise and at sunset grow most fair;
His glory by my glories I declare.

Powers

We Powers are powers because He makes us strong;
Wherefore we roll all rolling orbs along,
We move all moving things, and sing our song.

Sun

I blaze to Him in mine engarlanding
Of rays, I flame His whole burnt-offering,
While as a bridegroom I rejoice and sing.

Moon

I follow, and am fair, and do His Will;
Through all my changes I am faithful still,
Full-orbed or strait His mandate to fulfil.

Stars

We Star-hosts numerous, innumerous,
Throng space with energy untumultuous,
And work His Will Whose eye beholdeth us.

GALAXIES AND NEBULÆ

thing is far or near; and therefore we
at neither far nor near; but where we be
ave dances round the Throne perpetually.

COMETS AND METEORS

r lights dart here and there,
whirl to and fro,
flash and vanish, we die down and glow;
doing His Will Who bids us do it so.

SHOWERS

give ourselves; and be we great or small,
is are we made like Him Who giveth all,
e Him Whose gracious pleasure bids us fall.

DEWS

give ourselves in silent secret ways,
nding and spent in silence full of grace;
l thus are made like God, and show His praise.

WINDS

sift the air and winnow all the earth;
l God Who poised our weights and weighs our worth
epts the worship of our solemn mirth.

FIRE

power and strength are His
Who fashioned me,
ained me image of His Jealousy,
Forged me His weapon fierce exceedingly.

HEAT

I glow unto His glory, and do good:
I glow, and bring to life both bud and brood;
I glow, and ripen harvest-crops for food.

WINTER AND SUMMER

Our wealth and joys and beauties celebrate
His wealth of beauty Who sustains our state,
Before Whose changelessness we alternate.

SPRING AND AUTUMN

I hope,—
And I remember,—
We give place
Either to other with contented grace,
Acceptable and lovely all our days.

FROST

I make the unstable stable, binding fast
The world of waters prone to ripple past:
Thus praise I God, Whose mercies I forecast.

COLD

I rouse and goad the slothful apt to nod,
I stir and urge the laggards with my rod:—
My praise is not of men, yet I praise God.

SNOW

My whiteness shadoweth Him Who is most fair,

All spotless: yea, my whiteness which I wear
Exalts His Purity beyond compare.

VAPOURS

We darken sun and moon, and blot the day,
The good Will of our Maker to obey:
Till to the glory of God we pass away.

NIGHT

Moon and all stars I don for diadem
To make me fair: I cast myself and them
Before His feet Who knows us gem from gem.

DAY

I shout before Him in my plenitude
Of light and warmth, of hope and wealth and food;
Ascribing all good to the Only Good.

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

I am God's dwelling-place,—
And also I
Make His pavilion,—
Lo, we bide and fly
Exulting in the Will of God Most High.

LIGHTNING AND THUNDER

We indivisible flash forth His Fame,
We thunder forth the glory of His Name,
In harmony of resonance and flame.

CLOUDS

Sweet is our store, exhaled from sea or river:
We wear a rainbow, praising God the Giver
Because His mercy is for ever and ever.

EARTH

I rest in Him rejoicing: resting so
And so rejoicing, in that I am low;
Yet known of Him, and following on to know.

MOUNTAINS

Our heights which laud Him sink abased before
Him higher than the highest evermore:
God higher than the highest we adore.

HILLS

We green-tops praise Him, and we fruitful heads,
Whereon the sunshine and the dew He sheds:
We green-tops praise Him, rising from our beds.

GREEN THINGS

We all green things, we blossoms bright or dim,
Trees, bushes, brushwood, corn and grasses slim,
We lift our many-favoured lauds to Him.

ROSE—LILY—VIOLET

I praise Him on my thorn which I adorn,—
And I, amid my world of thistle and thorn,—
And I, within my veil where I am born.

APPLE—CITRON—POMEGRANATE

We Apple-blossom, Citron, Pomegranate,
We clothed of God without our toil and fret,
We offer fatness where His Throne is set.

Vine—Cedar—Palm

)roffer Him my sweetness, who
am sweet,—
)ow my strength in fragrance at
His feet,—
'ave myself before His Judgment
seat.

Medicinal Herbs

ring refreshment,—
I bring ease and calm,—
avish strength and healing,—
I am balm,—
e work His pitiful Will and chant
our psalm.

A Spring

ar my pure fountain, clear and
pure my rill,
fountain and mine outflow deep
and still;
set His semblance forth and do
His Will.

Sea

-day I praise God with a sparkling
face,
thousand thousand waves all
uttering praise:
-morrow I commit me to His
Grace.

Floods

e spring and swell meandering to
and fro,
)m height to depth, from depth to
depth we flow,
e fertilize the world, and praise
Him so.

Whales and Sea Mammals

e Whales and Monsters gambol
in His sight,
Rejoicing every day and every
night,
Safe in the tender keeping of His
Might.

Fishes

Our fashions and our colours and
our speeds
Set forth His praise Who framed us
and Who feeds,
Who knows our number and regards
our needs.

Birds

Winged Angels of this visible world,
we fly
To sing God's praises in the lofty
sky;
We scale the height to praise our
Lord most High.

Eagle and Dove

I the sun-gazing Eagle,—
I the Dove
With plumes of softness and a note
of love,—
We praise by divers gifts One God
above.

Beasts and Cattle

We forest Beasts,—
We Beasts of hill or cave,—
We border-loving Creatures of the
wave,—
We praise our King with voices deep
and grave.

Small Animals

God forms us weak and small, but
pours out all
We need, and notes us while we
stand or fall:
Wherefore we praise Him, weak and
safe and small.

LAMB

I praise my loving Lord, Who maketh me
His type by harmless sweet simplicity :
Yet He the Lamb of lambs incomparably.

LION

I praise the Lion of the Royal Race,
Strongest in fight and swiftest in the chase :
With all my might I leap and lavish praise.

ALL MEN

All creatures sing around us, and we sing :
We bring our own selves as our offering,
Our very selves we render to our King.

ISRAEL

Flock of our Shepherd's pasture and His fold,
Purchased and well-beloved from days of old,
We tell His praise which still remains untold.

PRIESTS

We free-will Shepherds tend His sheep and feed ;
We follow Him while caring for their need ;
We follow praising Him, and them we lead.

SERVANTS OF GOD

We love God, for He loves us ; we are free
In serving Him, who serve Him willingly :
As kings we reign, and praise His Majesty.

HOLY AND HUMBLE PERSONS

All humble souls He calls and sanctifies ;
All holy souls He calls to make them wise ;
Accepting all, His free-will sacrifice.

BABES

He maketh me,—
And me,—
And me,—
To be
His blessed little ones around His knee,
Who praise Him by mere love confidingly.

WOMEN

God makes our service love, and makes our wage
Love : so we wend on patient pilgrimage,
Extolling Him by love from age to age.

MEN

God gives us power to rule : He gives us power
To rule ourselves, and prune the exuberant flower
Of youth, and worship Him hour after hour.

SPIRITS AND SOULS—

Lo in the hidden world we chant our chant
To Him Who fills us that we nothing want,
To Him Whose bounty leaves our craving scant.

OF BABES—

With milky mouths we praise God, from the breast

lled home betimes to rest the
perfect rest,
love and joy fulfilling His behest.

OF WOMEN—

e praise His Will which made us
what He would,
s Will which fashioned us and
called us good,
s Will our plenary beatitude.

OF MEN

e praise His Will Who bore with
us so long,
ho out of weakness wrought us
swift and strong,
ampions of right and putters-
down of wrong.

ALL

t everything that hath or hath
not breath,
t days and endless days, let life
and death,
aise God, praise God, praise God,
His creature saith.

Before 1882.

LATER LIFE: A DOUBLE SONNET OF SONNETS

I

EFORE the mountains were brought
forth, before
Earth and the world were made,
then God was God:
d God will still be God when
flames shall roar
Round earth and heaven dis-
solving at His nod:
And this God is our God, even
while His rod
Of righteous wrath falls on us smiting
sore:
And this God is our God for ever-
more,
Through life, through death, while
clod returns to clod.
For though He slay us we will trust
in Him;
We will flock home to Him by
divers ways:
Yea, though He slay us we will
vaunt His praise,
Serving and loving with the Cheru-
bim,
Watching and loving with the Sera-
phim,
Our very selves His praise through
endless days.

II

Rend hearts and rend not garments
for our sins;
Gird sackcloth not on body but
on soul;
Grovel in dust with faces toward
the goal
Nor won nor neared: he only laughs
who wins.
Not neared the goal, the race too
late begins;
All left undone, we have yet to
do the whole;
The sun is hurrying west and
toward the pole
Where darkness waits for earth with
all her kins.
Let us to-day while it is called to-day
Set out, if utmost speed may yet
avail—
The shadows lengthen and the
light grows pale:
For who through darkness and
the shadow of death,

Darkness that may be felt, shall find a way,
Blind-eyed, deaf-eared, and choked with failing breath?

3

Thou Who didst make and knowest whereof we are made,
Oh bear in mind our dust and nothingness,
Our wordless tearless numbness of distress:
Bear Thou in mind the burden Thou hast laid
Upon us, and our feebleness unstayed
Except Thou stay us: for the long long race
Which stretches far and far before our face
Thou knowest, — remember Thou whereof we are made.
If making makes us Thine then Thine we are,
And if redemption we are twice Thine own:
If once Thou didst come down from heaven afar
To seek us and to find us, how not save?
Comfort us, save us, leave us not alone,
Thou who didst die our death and fill our grave.

4

So tired am I, so weary of to-day,
So unrefreshed from foregone weariness,
So overburdened by foreseen distress,
So lagging and so stumbling on my way,
I scarce can rouse myself to watch or pray,
To hope, or aim, or toil for more or less,—
Ah always less and less, even while I press
Forward and toil and aim as best I may.
Half-starved of soul and heartsick utterly,
Yet lift I up my heart and soul and eyes
(Which fail in looking upward) toward the prize:
Me, Lord, Thou seest though I see not Thee;
Me now, as once the Thief in Paradise,
Even me, O Lord my Lord, remember me.

5

Lord, Thou Thyself art Love and only Thou;
Yet I who am not love would fain love Thee;
But Thou alone being Love canst furnish me
With that same love my heart is craving now.
Allow my plea! for if Thou disallow,
No second fountain can I find but Thee;
No second hope or help is left to me,
No second anything, but only Thou.
O Love, accept, according my request;
O Love, exhaust, fulfilling my desire:
Uphold me with the strength that cannot tire,
Nerve me to labour till Thou bid me rest,
Kindle my fire from Thine unkindled fire,

nd charm the willing heart from
out my breast.

6

'e lack, yet cannot fix upon the lack:
Not this, nor that; yet somewhat,
certainly.
We see the things we do not yearn
to see
round us: and what see we glancing
back?
ost hopes that leave our hearts upon
the rack,
Hopes that were never ours yet
seemed to be,
For which we steered on life's salt
stormy sea
raving the sunstroke and the frozen
pack.
thus to look behind is all in vain,
And all in vain to look to left or
right,
Vhy face we not our future once
again,
aunching with hardier hearts across
the main,
Straining dim eyes to catch the
invisible sight,
nd strong to bear ourselves in
patient pain?

7

o love and to remember; that is
good:
To love and to forget; that is
not well:
To lapse from love to hatred; that is hell
nd death and torment, rightly
understood.
oul dazed by love and sorrow,
cheer thy mood;
More blest art thou than mortal
tongue can tell:
Ring not thy funeral but thy
marriage bell,
And salt with hope thy life's insipid
food.
Love is the goal, love is the way we
wend,
Love is our parallel unending line
Whose only perfect Parallel is
Christ,
Beginning not begun, End without
end:
For He Who hath the Heart
of God sufficed
Can satisfy all hearts,—yea, thine
and mine.

8

We feel and see with different hearts
and eyes:—
Ah Christ, if all our hearts could
meet in Thee,
How well it were for them and
well for me,
Our hearts Thy dear accepted sacri-
fice.
Thou, only Life of hearts and Light
of eyes,
Our life, our light, if once we turn
to Thee,
So be it, O Lord, to them and so
to me;
Be all alike Thine own dear sacrifice.
Thou Who by death hast ransomed
us from death,
Thyself God's sole well-pleasing
Sacrifice,
Thine only sacred Self I plead
with Thee:
Make Thou it well for them
and well for me
That Thou hast given us souls and
wills and breath,
And hearts to love Thee, and to
see Thine eyes.

9

Star Sirius and the Pole Star dwell afar
Beyond the drawings each of other's strength.
One blazes through the brief bright summer's length
Lavishing life-heat from a flaming car;
While one unchangeable upon a throne
Broods o'er the frozen heart of earth alone,
Content to reign the bright particular star
Of some who wander or of some who groan.
They own no drawings each of other's strength,
Nor vibrate in a visible sympathy,
Nor veer along their courses each toward each:
Yet are their orbits pitched in harmony
Of one dear heaven, across whose depth and length
Mayhap they talk together without speech.

10

Tread softly! all the earth is holy ground.
It may be, could we look with seeing eyes,
This spot we stand on is a Paradise
Where dead have come to life and lost been found,
Where Faith has triumphed, Martyrdom been crowned,
Where fools have foiled the wisdom of the wise;
From this same spot the dust of saints may rise,
And the King's prisoners come to light unbound.
O earth, earth, earth, hear thou thy Maker's Word:
'Thy dead thou shalt give up, nor hide thy slain.'
Some who went weeping forth shall come again
Rejoicing from the east or from the west,
As doves fly to their windows, love's own bird
Contented and desirous to the nest.[1]

11

Lifelong our stumbles, lifelong our regret,
Lifelong our efforts failing and renewed,
While lifelong is our witness, 'God is good,'
Who bore with us till now, bears with us yet,
Who still remembers and will not forget,
Who gives us light and warmth and daily food;
And gracious promises half understood,
And glories half unveiled, whereon to set
Our heart of hearts and eyes of our desire;
Uplifting us to longing and to love,
Luring us upward from this world of mire,

[1] 'Quali colombe dal disio chiamate
Con l'ali aperte e ferme al dolce nido
Volan per l'aer dal voler portate.'
DANTE.

Urging us to press on and mount above
Ourselves and all we have had experience of,
Iounting to Him in love's perpetual fire.

12

dream there is wherein we are fain to scream,
While struggling with ourselves we cannot speak :
And much of all our waking life, as weak
nd misconceived, eludes us like the dream.
or half life's seemings are not what they seem,
And vain the laughs we laugh, the shrieks we shriek ;
Yea, all is vain that mars the settled meek
ontented quiet of our daily theme.
/hen I was young I deemed that sweets are sweet :
But now I deem some searching bitters are
Sweeter than sweets, and more refreshing far,
And to be relished more, and more desired,
nd more to be pursued on eager feet,
On feet untired, and still on feet though tired.

13

hame is a shadow cast by sin : yet shame
Itself may be a glory and a grace,
Refashioning the sin-disfashioned face ;
nobler bruit than hollow-sounded fame,
A new-lit lustre on a tarnished name,
One virtue pent within an evil place,
Strength for the fight, and swiftness for the race,
A stinging salve, a life-requickening flame.
A salve so searching we may scarcely live,
A flame so fierce it seems that we must die,
An actual cautery thrust into the heart :
Nevertheless, men die not of such smart ;
And shame gives back what nothing else can give,
Man to himself,—then sets him up on high.

14

When Adam and when Eve left Paradise,
Did they love on and cling together still,
Forgiving one another all that ill
The twain had wrought on such a different wise ?
She propped upon his strength, and he in guise
Of lover though of lord, girt to fulfil
Their term of life and die when God should will ;
Lie down and sleep, and having slept arise.
Boast not against us, O our enemy !
To-day we fall, but we shall rise again ;
We grope to-day, to-morrow we shall see :
What is to-day that we should fear to-day ?

A morrow cometh which shall sweep away
Thee and thy realm of change and death and pain.

15

Let woman fear to teach and bear to learn,
Remembering the first woman's first mistake.
Eve had for pupil the inquiring snake,
Whose doubts she answered on a great concern;
But he the tables so contrived to turn,
It next was his to give and hers to take;
Till man deemed poison sweet for her sweet sake,
And fired a train by which the world must burn.
Did Adam love his Eve from first to last?
I think so; as we love who works us ill,
And wounds us to the quick, yet loves us still.
Love pardons the unpardonable past:
Love in a dominant embrace holds fast
His frailer self, and saves without her will.

16

Our teachers teach that one and one make two:
Later, Love rules that one and one make one:
Abstruse the problems! neither need we shun,
But skilfully to each should yield its due.
The narrower total seems to suit the few,
The wider total suits the common run;
Each obvious in its sphere like moon or sun;
Both provable by me, and both by you.
Befogged and witless, in a wordy maze
A groping stroll perhaps may do us good;
If cloyed we are with much we have understood,
If tired of half our dusty world and ways,
If sick of fasting, and if sick of food;
And how about these long still-lengthening days?

17

Something this foggy day, a something which
Is neither of this fog nor of to-day,
Has set me dreaming of the winds that play
Past certain cliffs, along one certain beach,
And turn the topmost edge of waves to spray:
Ah pleasant pebbly strand so far away,
So out of reach while quite within my reach,
As out of reach as India or Cathay!
I am sick of where I am and where I am not,
I am sick of foresight and of memory,
I am sick of all I have and all I see,
I am sick of self, and there is nothing new;
Oh weary impatient patience of my lot!—
Thus with myself: how fares it, Friends, with you?

18

) late in Autumn half the world's asleep,
And half the wakeful world looks pinched and pale ;
For dampness now, not freshness, rides the gale ;
nd cold and colourless comes ashore the deep
ith tides that bluster or with tides that creep ;
Now veiled uncouthness wears an uncouth veil
Of fog, not sultry haze ; and blight and bale
ave done their worst, and leaves rot on the heap.
) late in Autumn one forgets the Spring,
Forgets the Summer with its opulence,
ie callow birds that long have found a wing,
The swallows that more lately gat them hence :
ill anything like Spring, will anything
Like Summer, rouse one day the slumbering sense ?

19

ere now is Winter. Winter, after all,
Is not so drear as was my boding dream
While Autumn gleamed its latest watery gleam
n sapless leafage too inert to fall.
ill leaves and berries clothe my garden wall
Where ivy thrives on scantiest sunny beam ;
Still here a bud and there a blossom seem
opeful, and robin still is musical.
Leaves, flowers, and fruit, and one delightful song,
Remain ; these days are short, but now the nights,
Intense and long, hang out their utmost lights ;
Such starry nights are long, yet not too long ;
Frost nips the weak, while strengthening still the strong
Against that day when Spring sets all to rights.

20

A hundred thousand birds salute the day :—
One solitary bird salutes the night :
Its mellow grieving wiles our grief away,
And tunes our weary watches to delight ;
It seems to sing the thoughts we cannot say,
To know and sing them, and to set them right ;
Until we feel once more that May is May,
And hope some buds may bloom without a blight.
This solitary bird outweighs, outvies,
The hundred thousand merry-making birds ;
Whose innocent warblings yet might make us wise,
Would we but follow when they bid us rise,
Would we but set their notes of praise to words
And launch our hearts up with them to the skies.

21

A host of things I take on trust : I take
The nightingales on trust, for few and far

Between those actual summer moments are
When I have heard what melody they make.
So chanced it once at Como on the Lake:
But all things, then, waxed musical; each star
Sang on its course, each breeze sang on its car,
All harmonies sang to senses wide awake.
All things in tune, myself not out of tune,
Those nightingales were nightingales indeed:
Yet truly an owl had satisfied my need,
And wrought a rapture underneath that moon,
Or simple sparrow chirping from a reed;
For June that night glowed like a doubled June.

22

The mountains in their overwhelming might
Moved me to sadness when I saw them first,
And afterwards they moved me to delight;
Struck harmonies from silent chords which burst
Out into song, a song by memory nursed;
For ever unrenewed by touch or sight
Sleeps the keen magic of each day or night,
In pleasure and in wonder then immersed.
All Switzerland behind us on the ascent,
All Italy before us, we plunged down
St. Gothard, garden of forget-me-not:
Yet why should such a flower choose such a spot?
Could we forget that way which once we went
Though not one flower had bloomed to weave its crown?

23

Beyond the seas we know stretch seas unknown,
Blue and bright-coloured for our dim and green;
Beyond the lands we see stretch lands unseen
With many-tinted tangle overgrown;
And icebound seas there are like seas of stone,
Serenely stormless as death lies serene;
And lifeless tracts of sand, which intervene
Betwixt the lands where living flowers are blown.
This dead and living world befits our case
Who live and die: we live in wearied hope,
We die in hope not dead; we run a race
To-day, and find no present halting-place;
All things we see lie far within our scope,
And still we peer beyond with craving face.

24

The wise do send their hearts before them to
Dear blessed Heaven, despite the veil between;

The foolish nurse their hearts within the screen
this familiar world, where all we do
have is old, for there is nothing new:
Yet elder far that world we have not seen;
God's Presence antedates what else hath been:
ny the foolish seem, the wise seem few.
foolishest fond folly of a heart
Divided, neither here nor there at rest!
That hankers after Heaven, but clings to earth;
That neither here nor there knows thorough mirth,
f-choosing, wholly missing, the good part:—
h fool among the foolish, in thy quest!

25

n we consider what this life we lead
not, and is: how full of toil and pain,
ow blank of rest and of substantial gain,
t by hunger earth can never feed,
propping half our hearts upon a reed;
e cease to mourn lost treasures, mourned in vain,
ost treasures we are fain and yet not fain
tch back for a solace of our need.
who that feel this burden and this strain,
is wide vacuity of hope and heart,
ld bring their cherished well-beloved again:

To bleed with them and wince beneath the smart,
To have with stinted bliss such lavish bane,
To hold in lieu of all so poor a part?

26

This Life is full of numbness and of balk,
Of haltingness and baffled short-coming,
Of promise unfulfilled, of everything
That is puffed vanity and empty talk:
Its very bud hangs cankered on the stalk,
Its very song-bird trails a broken wing,
Its very Spring is not indeed like Spring,
But sighs like Autumn round an aimless walk.
This Life we live is dead for all its breath;
Death's self it is, set off on pilgrimage,
Travelling with tottering steps the first short stage:
The second stage is one mere desert dust
Where Death sits veiled amid creation's rust:—
Unveil thy face, O Death who art not Death.

27

I have dreamed of Death:—what will it be to die
Not in a dream, but in the literal truth,
With all Death's adjuncts ghastly and uncouth,
The pang that is the last and the last sigh?

Too dulled, it may be, for a last
good-bye,
Too comfortless for any one to
soothe,
A helpless charmless spectacle of
ruth
Through long last hours, so long
while yet they fly.
So long to those who hopeless in
their fear
Watch the slow breath and look
for what they dread:
While I supine with ears that cease
to hear,
With eyes that glaze, with heart-
pulse running down
(Alas! no saint rejoicing on her bed),
May miss the goal at last, may miss
a crown.

28

In life our absent friend is far away:
But death may bring our friend
exceeding near,
Show him familiar faces long so
dear
And lead him back in reach of words
we say.
He only cannot utter yea or nay
In any voice accustomed to our
ear;
He only cannot make his face
appear
And turn the sun back on our
shadowed day.
The dead may be around us, dear
and dead;
The unforgotten dearest dead may
be
Watching us with unslumbering
eyes and heart,
Brimful of words which cannot yet
be said,
Brimful of knowledge they may
not impart,
Brimful of love for you and love
for me.

Before 1882.

JUVENILIA

TO MY MOTHER

ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF HER BIRTH

(Presented with a Nosegay)

TO-DAY'S your natal day;
Sweet flowers I bring:
Mother, accept I pray
My offering.

And may you happy live,
And long us bless;
Receiving as you give
Great happiness.

27 *April* 1842.

THE CHINAMAN

'CENTRE of Earth!' a Chinaman
he said,
And bent over a map his pig-tailed
head,—
That map in which, portrayed in
colours bright,
China, all dazzling, burst upon the
sight;
'Centre of Earth!' repeatedly he
cries,
'Land of the brave, the beautiful,
the wise!'

us he exclaimed; when lo his
words arrested
owed what sharp agony his head
had tested.
feels a tug—another, and
another—
d quick exclaims, 'Hallo! what's
now the bother?'
t soon, alas, perceives. And, 'Why,
false night,
ny not from men shut out the
hateful sight?
e faithless English have cut off
my tail,
d left me my sad fortunes to
bewail.
w in the streets I can no more
appear,
r all the other men a pig-tail wear.'
said, and furious cast into the fire
; tail: those flames became its
funeral-pyre.

842.

HYMN

o the God who reigns on high,
To the Eternal Majesty,
o the Blessed Trinity,
Glory on earth be given,
n the sea and in the sky,
And in the highest heaven.

July 1843.

LOVE AND HOPE

Love for ever dwells in
heaven,—
Hope entereth not there.
To despairing man Love's
given,—
Hope dwells not with despair.
Love reigneth high, and reigneth low,
and reigneth everywhere.

In the inmost heart Love
dwelleth,—
It may not quenchèd be;
E'en when the life-blood welleth,
Its fond effects we see
In the name that leaves the lips the
last—fades last from
memory.

And when we shall awaken,
Ascending to the sky,
Though Hope shall have
forsaken,
Sweet Love shall never die:
For perfect Love and perfect bliss
shall be our lot on high.

9 *October* 1843.

ON ALBINA

The roses lingered in her cheeks
When fair Albina fainted;
O gentle reader, could it be
That fair Albina painted?

June 1844.

FORGET ME NOT

'Forget me not, forget me not!'
The maiden once did say,
When to some far-off battlefield
Her lover sped away.

'Forget me not, forget me not!'
Says now the chamber-maid,
When the traveller on his journey
No more will be delayed.

19 *August* 1844.

CHARITY

I PRAISED the myrtle and the rose,
At sunrise in their beauty lying :
I passed them at the short day's close,
And both were dying.

The summer sun his rays was throwing
Brightly : yet ere I sought my rest
His last cold ray, more deeply glowing,
Died in the west.

After this bleak world's stormy weather,
All, all, save Love alone, shall die ;
For Faith and Hope shall merge together
In Charity.

20 *September* 1844.

EARTH AND HEAVEN

WATER calmly flowing,
Sunlight deeply glowing,
Swans some river riding
That is gently gliding
By the fresh green rushes,
The sweet rose that blushes,
Hyacinths whose dower
Is both scent and flower,
Skylark's soaring motion,
Sunrise from the ocean,
Jewels that lie sparkling
'Neath the waters darkling,
Seaweed, coral, amber,
Flowers that climb and clamber
Or more lowly flourish
Where the earth may nourish :
All these are beautiful,
Of beauty earth is full :
Say, to our promised heaven
Can greater charms be given ?
Yes, for aye in heaven doth dwell,
Glowing, indestructible,
What here below finds tainted birth
In the corrupted sons of earth :
For, filling there and satisfying
Man's soul unchanging and undying,
Earth's fleeting joys and beauties far above,
In heaven is Love.

28 *December* 1844.

LOVE EPHEMERAL

LOVE is sweet, and so are flowers
Blooming in bright summer bowers ;
So are waters, clear and pure,
In some hidden fountain's store ;
So is the soft southern breeze
Sighing low among the trees ;
So is the bright queen of heaven
Reigning in the quiet even.
Yet the pallid moon may breed
Madness in man's feeble seed ;
And the wind's soft influence
Often breathes the pestilence ;
And the waves may sullied be
As they hurry to the sea ;
Flowers soon must fade away :
Love endures but for a day.

25 *February* 1845.

BURIAL ANTHEM

FLESH of our flesh, bone of our bone—
For thou and we in Christ are one—
Thy soul unto its rest hath flown,

nd thou hast left us all alone
Our weary race to run
doubt and want and sin and pain,
Whilst thou wilt never sin again.
or us remaineth heaviness;
nou never more shalt feel distress,—
For thou hast found repose
eside the bright eternal river,
hat clear and pure flows on for ever
And sings as on it flows.
nd it is better far for thee
To reach at once thy rest
han share with us earth's misery,
Or tainted joy at best.
other, we will not mourn for thee,
Although our hearts be weary
struggling with our enemy
When all around is dreary:
it we will pray that still we may
ess onward in the narrow way,
ith a calm thankful resignation,
nd joy in this our desolation;
nd we will hope at length to be
ith our Great Head—and, friend, with thee—
Beside that river blest.

3 *March* 1845.

LINES TO MY GRANDFATHER

EAR Grandpapa,—To be obedient,
I'll try and write a letter;
hich (as I hope you'll deem expedient)
Must serve for lack of better.

y Muse of late was not prolific;
And sometimes I must feel
make a verse a task terrific
Rather of woe than weal.

As I have met with no adventure
Of wonder and refulgence,
I must write plain things at a venture,
And trust to your indulgence.

The apple-tree is showing
Its blossom of bright red,
With a soft colour glowing
Upon its leafy bed.

The pear-tree's pure white blossom
Like stainless snow is seen;
And all earth's genial bosom
Is clothed with varied green.

The fragrant may is blooming,
The yellow cowslip blows;
Among its leaves entombing
Peeps forth the pale primrose.

The king-cup flowers and daisies
Are opening hard by;
And many another raises
Its head, to please and die.

I love the gay wild flowers
Waving in fresh Spring air:—
Give me uncultured bowers
Before the bright parterre.

And now my letter is concluded;
To do well I have striven;
And, though news is well-nigh excluded,
I hope to be forgiven.

With love to all the beautiful
And those who cannot slaughter,
I sign myself—Your dutiful
Affectionate grand-daughter.

1 *May* 1845.

SUMMER

HARK to the song of greeting!
The tall trees
Murmur their welcome in the southern breeze;
Amid the thickest foliage many a bird
Sits singing, their shrill matins scarcely heard
One by one, but all together
Welcoming the sunny weather;
In every bower hums a bee
Fluttering melodiously;
Murmurs joy in every brook,
Rippling with a pleasant look:
What greet they with their guileless bliss?
What welcome with a song like this?

See in the south a radiant form,
Her fair head crowned with roses;
From her bright footpath flies the storm;
Upon her breast reposes
Many an unconfinèd tress,
Golden, glossy, motionless.
Face and form are love and light,
Soft ineffably, yet bright.
All her path is strewn with flowers;
Round her float the laughing Hours;
Heaven and Earth make joyful din,
Welcoming sweet Summer in.

And now she alights on the earth
To play with her children the flowers;
She touches the stems, and the buds have birth,
And gently she trains them in bowers.
And the bees and the birds are glad,
And the wind catches warmth from her breath,
And around her is nothing sad
Nor any traces of death.
See now she lays her down
With roses for her crown,
With jessamine and myrtle
Forming her fragrant kirtle.
Conquered by softest slumbers,
No more the hours she numbers—
The hours that intervene
Ere she may wing her flight
Far from this smiling scene
With all her love and light,
And leave the flowers and the summer bowers
To wither in autumn and winter hours.

And must they wither then?
Their life and their perfume
Sinking so soon again
Into their earthy tomb.
Let us bind her as she lies
Ere the fleeting moment flies,
Hand and foot and arm and bosom,
With a chain of bud and blossom;
Twine red roses round her hands:
Round her feet twine myrtle bands.
Heap up flowers, higher, higher,—
Tulips like a glowing fire,
Clematis of milky whiteness,
Sweet geraniums' varied brightness,
Honeysuckle, commeline,
Roses, myrtles, jessamine;
Heap them higher, bloom on bloom.
Bury her as in a tomb.

But alas they are withered all,
And how can dead flowers bind her?
She pushes away her pall,

And she leaves the dead behind her:
And she flies across the seas,
To gladden for a time
The blossoms and the bees
Of some far-distant clime.
4 *December* 1845.

SERENADE

ME, wander forth with me: the orange flowers
eathe faintest perfume from the summer bowers.
me, wander forth with me: the moon on high
ines proudly in a flood of brilliancy;
Around her car each burning star
Gleams like a beacon from afar.
The night wind scarce disturbs the sea
As it sighs forth so languidly,
Laden with sweetness like a bee;
And all is still, below, above,
Save murmurs of the turtle-dove
That murmurs ever of its love.
For now 'tis the hour, the balmy hour,
When the strains of love have chiefly power;
When the maid looks forth from her latticed bower,
With a gentle yielding smile,
Donning her mantle all the while.
Now the moon beams down on high
From her halo brilliantly,
By the dark clouds unencumbered
That once o'er her pale face slumbered:
Far from her mild rays flutters Folly,
For on them floats calm Melancholy;—
A passionless sadness without dread,
Like the thought of those we love, long dead;
Full of hope and chastened joy,
Heavenly, without earth's alloy.
Listen, dearest: all is quiet—
Slumbering the world's toil and riot;
And all is fair in earth and sky and sea.
Come, wander forth with me.
4 *December* 1845.

THE END OF TIME

THOU who art dreary
With a curcless woe,
Thou who art weary
Of all things below,
Thou who art weeping
By the loved sick bed,
Thou who art keeping
Watches o'er the dead,—
Hope, hope! old Time flies fast upon his way,
And soon will cease the night, and soon will dawn the day.

The rose blooms brightly,
But it fades ere night;
And youth flies lightly,
Yet how sure its flight!
And still the river
Merges in the sea;
And Death reigns ever
Whilst old Time shall be;—
Yet hope! old Time flies fast upon his way,
And soon will cease the night, and soon will dawn the day.

All we most cherish
In this world below,

What though it perish ?
It has aye been so.
So through all ages
It has ever been,
To fools and sages,
Noble men and mean :—
Yet hope, still hope ! for Time flies on his way,
And soon will end the night, and soon will dawn the day.

All of each nation
Shall that morning see
With exultation
Or with misery :
From watery slumbers,
From the opening sod,
Shall rise up numbers
To be judged by God.
Then hope and fear, for Time speeds on his way,
And soon must end the night, and soon must dawn the day.

9 *December* 1845.

COUPLET

'COME cheer up, my lads, 'tis to glory we steer'—
As the soldier remarked whose post lay in the rear.

Circa 1845.

AMORE E DOVERE

CHIAMI il mio core
Crudele, altero :
No non è vero,
Crudel non è :
T' amo, t' amai—
E tu lo sai—
Men del dovere,
Ma più di me.

O ruscelletto,
Dì al Dio d' Amore
Che questo petto,
Che questo core,
A lui ricetto
Più non darà.
L' alme tradisce
Senza rimorso ;
Non compatisce,
Non dà soccorso,
E si nudrisce
Di crudeltà.—

T' intendo, ti lagni,
Mio povero core ;
T' intendo, l' Amore
Si lagna di me.
Deh placati alfine !
Mi pungon le spine
Che vengon da te.

1845 *to* 1847.

MOTHER AND CHILD

'WHAT art thou thinking of,' said the mother,
'What art thou thinking of, my child ?'
'I was thinking of heaven,' he answered her,
And looked up in her face and smiled.

'And what didst thou think of heaven ?' she said ;
'Tell me, my little one.'
'Oh I thought that there the flowers never fade,
That there never sets the sun.'

'And wouldst thou love to go thither, my child,
Thither wouldst thou love to go,

ıd leave the pretty flowers that
wither,
And the sun that sets below?'

)h I would be glad to go there,
mother,
To go and live there now;
ıd I would pray for thy coming,
mother;—
My mother, wouldst not thou?'

o *January* 1846.

MARY MAGDALENE

E came in deep repentance,
And knelt down at His feet
ıo can change the sorrow into joy,
The bitter into sweet.

e had cast away her jewels
And her rich attire,
d her breast was filled with a holy
shame,
And her heart with a holy fire.

r tears were more precious
Than her precious pearls—
r tears that fell upon His feet
As she wiped them with her curls.

r youth and her beauty
Were budding to their prime;
she wept for the great trans-
gression,
The sin of other time.

mbling betwixt hope and fear,
She sought the King of Heaven,
sook the evil of her ways,
Loved much, and was forgiven.

February 1846.

ON THE DEATH OF A CAT

A FRIEND OF MINE AGED TEN YEARS AND A HALF

WHO shall tell the lady's grief
When her Cat was past relief?
Who shall number the hot tears
Shed o'er her, belov'd for years?
Who shall say the dark dismay
Which her dying caused that day?

Come, ye Muses, one and all,
Come obedient to my call;
Come and mourn with tuneful breath
Each one for a separate death;
And, while you in numbers sigh,
I will sing her elegy.

Of a noble race she came,
And Grimalkin was her name.
Young and old full many a mouse
Felt the prowess of her house;
Weak and strong full many a rat
Cowered beneath her crushing pat;
And the birds around the place
Shrank from her too close embrace.
But one night, reft of her strength,
She lay down and died at length:
Lay a kitten by her side
In whose life the mother died.
Spare her line and lineage,
Guard her kitten's tender age,
And that kitten's name as wide
Shall be known as hers that died.
And whoever passes by
The poor grave where Puss doth
lie,
Softly, softly let him tread,
Nor disturb her narrow bed.

14 *March* 1846.

TO ELIZABETH READ

WITH SOME POSTAGE-STAMPS FOR A COLLECTION

SWEETEST Elizabeth, accept, I pray,
These lowly stamps I send in homage true:
One hundred humble servants in their way
Are not to be despised, though poor to view.
Their livery of red and black—nor gay
Nor sober all—is typical of you,
In whom are gravity and gladness mixt:
Thought here, smiles there—perfection lies betwixt.

17 *March* 1846.

LOVE ATTACKED

LOVE is more sweet than flowers,
But sooner dying;
Warmer than sunny hours,
But faster flying;

Softer than music whispers,
Springing with day,
To murmur till the vespers,
Then die away;

More kind than friendship's greeting,
But as untrue;
Brighter than hope, but fleeting
More swiftly too.

Like breath of summer breezes
Gently it sighs,
But soon alas one ceases,
The other dies:
And like an inundation
It leaves behind
An utter desolation
Of heart and mind.

Who then would court Love's presence,
If here below
It can but be the essence
Of restless woe?

Returned or unrequited,
'Tis still the same;
The flame was never lighted,
Or sinks the flame.

Yet all, both fools and sages,
Have felt its power,
In distant lands and ages,—
Here, at this hour.

Then what from fear and weeping
Shall give me rest?
Oh tell me, ye who sleeping
At length are blest!

In answer to my crying,
Sounds like incense
Rose from the earth, replying,
'Indifference.'

21 *April* 1846.

LOVE DEFENDED

WHO extols a wilderness?
Who hath praised indifference?
Foolish one, thy words are sweet,
But devoid of sense.

As the man who ne'er hath seen,
Or as he who cannot hear,
Is the heart that hath no part
In Love's hope and fear.

ue, the blind do not perceive
e unsightly things around ;
ue, the deaf man trembleth not
At an awful sound.

t the face of heaven and earth,
d the murmur of the main,
rely are a recompense
For a little pain.

though Love may not be free
ways from a taint of grief,
ts sting is very sharp,
Great is its relief.
3 *April* 1846.

THE MARTYR

See, the sun hath risen—
Lead her from the prison ;
e is young and tender,—lead her
tenderly :
May no fear subdue her,
Lest the saints be fewer—
st her place in heaven be lost
eternally.

Forth she came, not trembling,
No nor yet dissembling
o'erwhelming terror weighing her
down, down ;
Little, little heeding
Earth, but inly pleading
the strength to triumph and to
win a crown.

All her might was rallied
To her heart ; not pallid
s her cheek, but glowing with a
glorious red ;
Glorious red and saintly,
Never paling faintly,
still flushing, kindling still, without thought of dread.

On she went, on faster,
Trusting in her Master,
Feeling that His eye watched o'er
her lovingly ;
He would prove and try her,
But would not deny her
When her soul had past, for His
sake, patiently.

'Christ,' she said, 'receive
me,—
Let no terrors grieve me,—
Take my soul and guard it with Thy
heavenly cares :
Take my soul and guard it,—
Take it and reward it
With the love Thou bearest for the
love it bears.'

Quickened with a fire
Of sublime desire,
She looked up to heaven, and she
cried aloud :
'Death, I do entreat thee,
Come ! I go to meet thee ;
Wrap me in the whiteness of a virgin
shroud.'

On she went, hope-laden—
Happy, happy maiden !
Never more to tremble, and to weep
no more :
All her sins forgiven,
Straight the path to heaven,
Through the glowing fire, lay her
feet before.

On she went, on quickly,
And her breath came thickly,
With the longing to see God coming
pantingly :
Now the fire is kindled,
And her flesh has dwindled
Unto dust;—her soul is mounting up
on high :

Higher, higher mounting,
The swift moments counting,—
Fear is left beneath her, and the chastening rod:
Tears no more shall blind her;
Trouble lies behind her;
Satisfied with hopeful rest, and replete with God.

24 *May* 1846.

THE DYING MAN TO HIS BETROTHED

One word—'tis all I ask of thee;
One word—and that is little now
That I have learned thy wrong of me;
And thou too art unfaithful—thou!
O thou sweet poison, sweetest death,
O honey between serpent's teeth,
Breathe on me with thy scorching breath!

The last poor hope is fleeting now,
And with it life is ebbing fast;
I gaze upon thy cold white brow,
And loathe and love thee to the last.
And still thou keepest silence,—still
Thou look'st on me: for good or ill
Speak out, that I may know thy will.

Thou weepest, woman, and art pale:
Weep not, for thou shalt soon be free;
My life is ending like a tale
That was but never more shall be.
O blessed moments, ye fleet fast,
And soon the latest shall be past,
And she will be content at last.

Nay, tremble not, I have not curst
Thy house or mine, or thee or me.
The moment that I saw thee first,
The moment that I first loved thee,—
Curse *them?*—Alas I can but bless
In this mine hour of heaviness:—
Nay, sob not so in thy distress.

I have been harsh, thou say'st of me;—
God knows my heart was never so;
It never could be so to thee.
And now it is too late—I know
Thy grief—forgive me, love, 'tis o'er:
For I shall never trouble more
Thy life that was so calm before.

I pardon thee; mayst thou be blest!
Say, wilt thou sometimes think of me?
Oh may I, from my happy rest,
Still look with love on thine and thee,—
And may I pray for thee alway,
And for thy love still may I pray,
Waiting the everlasting day!

Stoop over me;—ah this is death!
I scarce can see thee at my side:
Stoop lower: let me feel thy breath,
O thou, mine own, my promised bride!
Pardon me, love;—I pardon thee:
And may our pardon sealèd be
Throughout the long eternity.

The pains of death my senses cover
Oh for His sake who died for men,
Be thou more true to this thy lover
Than thou hast been to me
Amen.
And, if he chide thee wrongfully,
One little moment think on me,
And thou wilt bear it patiently.

d now, O God, I turn to Thee :
Thou only, Father, canst not fail :
rd, Thou hast tried and broken me,
And yet Thy mercy shall prevail.
viour, through Thee I am forgiven ;—
Thou receive my soul, bloodshriven,
Christ, who art the Gate of Heaven !

4 *July* 1846.

LISETTA ALL' AMANTE

PERDONA al primo eccesso
D' un tenero dolore ;
A te promisi il core,
E vo' serbarlo a te.
Ma dimmi e mi consola :
M' ami tu ancor, cor mio ?
Se a te fedel son io,
Sarai fedele a me ?

Chè se nell' alma ingrata
Pensi ad abbandonarmi,
Anch' io saprò scordarmi
D' un amator crudel.
Ma crederlo non voglio,
Ma non lo vo' pensare ;
Chè nol potrei lasciare,
Chè gli sarei fedel.

olkestone, 11 *August* 1846.

THE DEAD BRIDE

ERE she lay so still and pale,
Vith her bridal robes around her :
is fleeting, life is frail,
Death had found her.

Gone for ever : gone away
From the love and light of earth ;
Gone for ever : who shall say
Where her second birth ?

Had her life been good and kind ?
Had her heart been meek and pure ?
Was she of a lowly mind,
Ready to endure ?

Did she still console the sad,
Soothe the widow's anguish wild,
Make the poor and needy glad,
Tend the orphan child ?

Who shall say what hope and fear
Crowded in her short life's span ?
If the love of God was dear,
Or the love of man ?

Happy bride if single-hearted
Her first love to God was given ;
If from this world she departed
But to dwell in heaven ;

If her faith on heaven was fixed
And her hope ; if charity
Filled her full of light unmixed
With earth's vanity.

But alas, if tainted pleasure
Won her heart and held it here,
Where is now her failing treasure,
All her gladness where ? . . .

Hush, too curious questioner ;
Hush, and think thine own sins o'er.
Little canst thou learn from her ;
For we know no more

Than that there she lies all pale
With her bridal robes around her:
Joy is fleeting—life is frail—
Death hath found her.

Folkestone, 10 *September* 1846.

WILL THESE HANDS NE'ER BE CLEAN?

AND who is this lies prostrate at thy feet?
And is he dead, thou man of wrath and pride?
Yes, now thy vengeance is complete,
Thy hate is satisfied.
What had he done to merit this of thee?
Who gave thee power to take away his life?
O deeply-rooted direful enmity
That ended in long strife!
See where he grasped thy mantle as he fell,
Staining it with his blood; how terrible
Must be the payment due for this in hell!

And dost thou think to go and see no more
Thy bleeding victim, now the struggle's o'er?
To find out peace in other lands,
And wash the red mark from thy hands?
It shall not be; for everywhere
He shall be with thee; and the air
Shall smell of blood, and on the wind
His groans pursue thee close behind.
When waking he shall stand before thee;
And when at length sleep shall come o'er thee,
Powerless to move, alive to dream,
So dreadful shall thy visions seem
That thou shalt own them even to be
More hateful than reality.
What time thou stoopest down to drink
Of limpid waters, thou shalt think
It is thy foe's blood bubbles up
From the polluted fountain's cup,
That stains thy lip, that cries to heaven
For vengeance—and it shall be given.

And when thy friends shall question thee,
'Why art thou changed so heavily?'
Trembling and fearful shalt thou say
'I am not changed,' and turn away;
For such an outcast thou shalt be
Thou wilt not dare ask sympathy.

And so thy life will pass, and day by day
The current of existence flow away;
And, though to thee earth shall be hell and breath
Vengeance, yet thou shalt tremble more at death.
And one by one thy friends will learn to fear thee,
And thou shalt live without a hope to cheer thee;
Lonely amid a thousand, chained though free,
The curse of memory shall cling to thee:

ges may pass away, worlds rise
and set—
But thou shalt not forget.
Folkestone, 16 *September* 1846.

GONE FOR EVER

HAPPY rosebud blooming
Upon thy parent tree,
ay, thou art too presuming ;
or soon the earth entombing
Thy faded charms shall be,
nd the chill damp consuming.

happy skylark springing
Up to the broad blue sky,
o fearless in thy winging,
o gladsome in thy singing,
Thou also soon shalt lie
here no sweet notes are ringing.

nd through life's shine and shower
We shall have joy and pain :
t in the summer bower
nd at the morning hour
We still shall look in vain
r the same bird and flower.
4 *October* 1846.

PRESENT AND FUTURE

HAT is life that we should love it,
Cherishing it evermore,
ver prizing aught above it,
Ever loth to give it o'er ?
it goodness ? is it gladness ?
ay, 'tis more of sin and sadness ;
Nay, of weariness 'tis more.

rthly joys are very fleeting,
Earthly sorrows very long ;
rting ever follows meeting,
Night succeeds to evensong.
Storms may darken in the morning
And eclipse the sun's bright dawning,
And the chilly gloom prolong.

But, though clouds may screen and
hide it,
The sun shines for evermore.
Then bear grief in hope : abide it,
Knowing that it must give o'er :
And the darkness shall flee from us,
And the sun beam down upon us
Ever glowing more and more.
5 *November* 1846.

THE TIME OF WAITING

LIFE is fleeting, joy is fleeting,
Coldness follows love and greeting,
Parting still succeeds to meeting.

If I say 'Rejoice to-day,'
Sorrow meets me in the way :
I cannot my will obey.

If I say 'My grief shall cease ;
Now then I will live in peace' :
My cares instantly increase.

When I look up to the sky,
Thinking to see light on high,
Clouds my searching glance defy.

When I look upon the earth
For the flowers that should have
birth,
I find dreariness and dearth.

And the winds sigh on for ever,
Murmurs still the flowing river,
On the graves the sunbeams quiver.

And destruction waxeth bold,
And the earth is growing old,
And I tremble in the cold.

And my weariness increases
To an ache that never ceases
And a pain that ne'er decreases.

And the times are turbulent,
And the Holy Church is rent,
And who tremble or repent?

And loud cries do ever rise
To the portals of the skies
From our earthly miseries;

From love slighted, not requited;
From high hope that should have lighted
All our path up, now benighted;

From the woes of humankind;
From the darkness of the mind;
From all anguish undefined;

From the heart that's crushed and sinking;
From the brain grown blank with thinking;
From the spirit sorrow drinking.

All cry out with pleading strong:
'Vengeance, Lord! how long, how long
Shall we suffer this great wrong?'

And the pleading and the cry
Of earth's sons are heard on high,
And are noted verily.

When this world shall be no more,
The oppressors shall endure
The great vengeance which is sure.

And the sinful shall remain
To an endless death and pain;
But the good shall live again,—
Never more to be oppressed;
Balm shall heal the bleeding breast,
And the weary be at rest.

All shall vanish of dejection,
Grief and fear and imperfection,
In that glorious resurrection.

Heed not then a night of sorrow,
If the dawning of the morrow
From past grief fresh beams shall borrow.

Thankful for whate'er is given,
Strive we, as we ne'er have striven,
For love's sake to be forgiven.

Then, the dark clouds opening,
Even to us the sun shall bring
Gladness, and sweet flowers shall spring.

For Christ's guiding love alway,
For the everlasting day,
For meek patience, let us pray.

16 *November* 1846.

TASSO AND LEONORA

A GLORIOUS vision hovers o'er his soul,
Gilding the prison and the weary bed,—
Though hard the pillow placed beneath his head,
Though brackish be the water in the bowl
Beside him: he can see the planets roll
In glowing adoration, without dread;
Knowing how, by unerring wisdom led,
They struggle not against the strong control.

hen suddenly a star shoots from
the skies,
Than all the other stars more
purely bright,
plete with heavenly loves and
harmonies.
He starts :—what meets his full
awakening sight ?
! Leonora, with large humid eyes,
Gazing upon him in the misty light.
9 *December* 1846.

LOVE

VE is all happiness, love is all
beauty,
e is the crown of flaxen heads
and hoary ;
e is the only everlasting duty ;
l love is chronicled in endless
story,
l kindles endless glory.
February 1847.

THE SOLITARY ROSE

APPY rose, red rose, that bloom-
est lonely
Where there are none to gather
while they love thee ;
t art perfumed by thine own
fragrance only,
esting like incense round thee
and above thee ;—
u hearest nought save some pure
stream that flows,
O happy rose.

t though for thee no nightin-
gales are singing ?
ey chant one eve, but hush them
in the morning.
thee no little moths and bees
are winging
To steal thy honey when the day
is dawning ;—
Thou keep'st thy sweetness till the
twilight's close,
O happy rose.

Then rest in peace, thou lone and
lovely flower ;
Yea be thou glad, knowing that
none are near thee,
To mar thy beauty in a wanton hour,
And scatter all thy leaves nor deign
to wear thee.
Securely in thy solitude repose,
O happy rose.
15 *March* 1847.

THE SONG OF THE STAR

I AM a Star dwelling on high
In the azure of the vaulted sky.
I shine on the land and I shine on
the sea,
And the little breezes talk to me.
The waves rise towards me every one,
And forget the brightness of the sun ;
The growing grass springs up to-
wards me,
And forgets the day's fertility.
My face is light, and my beam is life,
And my passionless being hath no
strife.
In me no love is turned to hate,
No fullness is made desolate ;
Here is no hope, no fear, no grief,
Here is no pain and no relief ;
Nor birth nor death hath part in me,
But a profound tranquillity.
The blossoms that bloomed yesterday
Unaltered shall bloom on to-day,
And on the morrow shall not fade.
Within the everlasting shade
The fountain gushing up for ever
Flows on to the eternal river,

That, running by a reedy shore,
Bubbles, bubbles evermore.
The happy birds sing in the trees
To the music of the southern breeze ;
And they fear no lack of food,
Chirping in the underwood ;
For ripe seeds and berried bushes
Serve the finches and the thrushes,
And all feathered fowls that dwell
In that shade majestical.
Beyond all clouds and all mistiness
I float in the strength of my loveliness.
And I move round the sun with a measured motion
In the blue expanse of the skyey ocean ;
And I hear the song of the angel throng
In a river of ecstasy flow along,
Without a pausing, without a hushing,
Like an everlasting fountain's gushing
That of its own will bubbles up
From a white untainted cup.
Countless planets float round me,
Differing all in majesty ;
Smaller some, and some more great,
Amethystine, roseate,
Golden, silvery, glowing blue,
Hueless, and of every hue.
Each and all, both great and small,
With a cadence musical,
Shoot out rays of glowing praise
Never ending, but always
Hymning the Creator's might
Who hath filled them full of light ;
Pealing through eternity,
Filling out immensity ;
Sun and moon and stars together
In heights where is no cloudy weather ;
Where is nor storm nor mist nor rain,
Where night goeth not to come again.
On and on and on, for ever,
Never ceasing, sinking never,
Voiceless adorations rise
To the heaven above the skies.
We all chant with a holy harmony,
No discord marreth our melody ;
Here are no strifes nor envyings,
But each with love joyously sings,
For ever and ever floating free
In the azure light of infinity.

19 *March* 1847.

RESURRECTION EVE

He resteth : weep not ;
The living sleep not
With so much calm.
  He hears no chiding
  And no deriding,
  Hath joy for sorrow,
  For night hath morrow,
For wounds hath balm,
For life's strange riot
Hath death and quiet.
Who would recall him
  Of those that love him ?
No fears appall him,
No ills befall him ;
  There's nought above him
Save turf and flowers
  And pleasant grass.
Pass the swift hours,
  How swiftly pass !
The hours of slumber
He doth not number ;
Grey hours of morning
Ere the day's dawning ;
Brightened by gleams
Of the sunbeams,—
By the foreseeing
  Of resurrection,
Of glorious being,
  Of full perfection,

Of sins forgiven
Before the face
Of men and spirits ;
Of God in heaven,
The resting-place
That he inherits.

April 1847.

THE DEAD CITY

E I rambled in a wood
n a careless hardihood,
eeding not the tangled way ;
abyrinths around me lay,
for them I never stood.

still on, I wandered on,
the sun above me shone ;
nd the birds around me winging
ith their everlasting singing
e me feel not quite alone.

e branches of the trees
murmured like the hum of bees
he low sound of happy breezes,
hose sweet voice that never
ceases
the heart to perfect ease.

mlets bubbled all around
he green and fertile ground,
rough the rushes and the grass,
ke a sheet of liquid glass,
a soft and trickling sound.

I went, I went on faster,
emplating no disaster ;
nd I plucked ripe blackberries,
t the birds with envious eyes
e and stole them from their
master.

For the birds here were all tame ;
Some with bodies like a flame ;
Some that glanced the branches through,
Pure and colourless as dew :
Fearlessly to me they came.

Before me no mortal stood
In the mazes of that wood ;
Before me the birds had never
Seen a man, but dwelt for ever
In a happy solitude :

Happy solitude, and blest
With beatitude of rest ;
Where the woods are ever vernal,
And the life and joy eternal,
Without death's or sorrow's test.

O most blessed solitude !
O most full beatitude !
Where are quiet without strife
And imperishable life,
Nothing marred and all things good.

And the bright sun, life-begetting,
Never rising, never setting,
Shining warmly overhead,
Nor too pallid nor too red,
Lulled me to a sweet forgetting—

Sweet forgetting of the time ;
And I listened for no chime
Which might warn me to be gone ;
But I wandered on, still on,
'Neath the boughs of oak and lime.

Know I not how long I strayed
In the pleasant leafy shade ;
But the trees had gradually
Grown more rare, the air more free,
The sun hotter overhead.

Soon the birds no more were seen
Glancing through the living green,
  And a blight had passed upon
  All the trees, and the pale sun
Shone with a strange lurid sheen.

Then a darkness spread around:
I saw nought; I heard no sound:
  Solid darkness overhead,
  With a trembling cautious tread
Passed I o'er the unseen ground.

But at length a pallid light
Broke upon my searching sight;
  A pale solitary ray
  Like a star at dawn of day
Ere the sun is hot and bright.

Towards its faintly glimmering beam
I went on as in a dream—
  A strange dream of hope and fear—
  And I saw, as I drew near,
'Twas in truth no planet's gleam;

But a lamp above a gate
Shone in solitary state,
  O'er a desert drear and cold,
  O'er a heap of ruins old,
O'er a scene most desolate.

By that gate I entered lone
A fair city of white stone;
  And a lovely light to see
  Dawned, and spread most gradually,
Till the air grew warm and shone.

Through the splendid streets I strayed
In that radiance without shade;
  Yet I heard no human sound;
  All was still and silent round
As a city of the dead.

All the doors were open wide;
Lattices on every side
  In the wind swung to and fro—
  Wind that whispered very low,
'Go and see the end of pride.'

With a fixed determination
Entered I each habitation;
  But they all were tenantless.
  All was utter loneliness,
All was deathless desolation.

In the noiseless market-place
Was no careworn busy face;
  There were none to buy or sell,
  None to listen or to tell,
In this silent emptiness.

Through the city on I went
Full of awe and wonderment.
  Still the light around me shone,
  And I wandered on, still on,
In my great astonishment.

Till at length I reached a place
Where amid an ample space
  Rose a palace for a king;
  Golden was the turreting,
And of solid gold the base.

The great porch was ivory,
And the steps were ebony;
  Diamond and chrysoprase
  Set the pillars in a blaze,
Capitalled with jewelry.

None was there to bar my way,
And the breezes seemed to say,
  'Touch not these, but pass them by,
  Pressing onwards'; therefore I
Entered in and made no stay.

around was desolate.
ent on ; a silent state
Reigned in each deserted room,
And I hastened through the gloom
I reached an outer gate.

n a shady avenue,
ssom-perfumed, met my view ;
Here and there the sunbeams fell
On pure founts whose sudden swell
from marble basons flew.

ry tree was fresh and green ;
a withered leaf was seen
Through the veil of flowers and fruit ;
trong and sapful were the root,
top boughs, and all between.

es were climbing everywhere
of purple grapes and fair ;
nd far off I saw the corn
Vith its heavy head down borne
he odour-laden air.

o shall strip the bending vine ?
o shall tread the press for wine ?
Who shall bring the harvest in
When the pallid ears begin
he sun to glow and shine ?

I went alone, alone,
I saw a tent that shone
Vith each bright and lustrous hue ;
was trimmed with jewels too,
with flowers ; not one was gone.

n the breezes whispered me :
ter in, and look, and see
ow for luxury and pride
great multitude have died.'
I entered tremblingly.

Lo a splendid banquet laid
In the cool and pleasant shade.
Mighty tables everything
Of sweet Nature's furnishing
That was rich and rare displayed ;

And each strange and luscious cate
Practised art makes delicate ;
With a thousand fair devices
Full of odours and of spices ;
And a warm voluptuous state.

All the vessels were of gold,
Set with gems of worth untold.
In the midst a fountain rose
Of pure milk, whose rippling flows
In a silver bason rolled.

In green emerald baskets were
Sun-red apples, streaked and fair ;
Here the nectarine and peach
And ripe plum lay, and on each
The bloom rested everywhere.

Grapes were hanging overhead,
Purple, pale, and ruby-red ;
And in panniers all around
Yellow melons shone, fresh found,
With the dew upon them spread.

And the apricot and pear
And the pulpy fig were there,
Cherries and dark mulberries,
Bunchy currants, strawberries,
And the lemon wan and fair :

And unnumbered others too,
Fruits of every size and hue,
Juicy in their ripe perfection,
Cool beneath the cool reflection
Of the curtains' skyey blue.

All the floor was strewn with flowers
Fresh from sunshine and from showers,
Roses, lilies, jessamine;
And the ivy ran between,
Like a thought in happy hours.

And this feast too lacked no guest
With its warm delicious rest;
With its couches softly sinking,
And its glow not made for thinking,
But for careless joy at best.

Many banqueters were there,
Wrinkled age, the young, the fair;
In the splendid revelry
Flushing cheek and kindling eye
Told of gladness without care.

Yet no laughter rang around,
Yet they uttered forth no sound;
With the smile upon his face
Each sat moveless in his place,
Silently, as if spellbound.

The low whispering voice was gone,
And I felt awed and alone.
In my great astonishment
To the feasters up I went—
Lo they all were turned to stone!

Yea they all were statue-cold,
Men and women, young and old;
With the life-like look and smile
And the flush; and all the while
The hard fingers kept their hold.

Here a little child was sitting
With a merry glance, befitting
Happy age and heedless heart;
There a young man sat apart,
With a forward look unweeting.

Nigh them was a maiden fair,
And the ringlets of her hair
Round her slender fingers twined
And she blushed as she reclined,
Knowing that her love was there.

Here a dead man sat to sup,
In his hand a drinking-cup;
Wine-cup of the heavy gold,
Human hand stony and cold,
And no life-breath struggling up.

There a mother lay and smiled
Down upon her infant child;
Happy child and happy mother,
Laughing back to one another
With a gladness undefiled.

Here an old man slept, worn out
With the revelry and rout;
Here a strong man sat and gazed
On a girl whose eyes upraised
No more wandered roundabout.

And none broke the stillness—none
I was the sole living one.
And methought that silently
Many seemed to look on me
With strange steadfast eyes that
shone.

Full of fear I would have fled;
Full of fear I bent my head,
Shutting out each stony guest—
When I looked again, the feast
And the tent had vanished.

Yes, once more I stood alone
Where the happy sunlight shone.
And a gentle wind was sighing,
And the little birds were flying,
And the dreariness was gone.

l these things that I have said
ved me and made me afraid.
What was I that I should see
So much hidden mystery?
id I straightway knelt and prayed.
9 *April* 1847.

THE ROSE

ROSE, thou flower of flowers, thou fragrant wonder,
Who shall describe thee in thy ruddy prime,
Thy perfect fullness in the summer-time,
hen the pale leaves blushingly part asunder
id show the warm red heart lies glowing under?
Thou shouldst bloom surely in some sunny clime,
Untouched by blights and chilly winter's rime,
here lightnings never flash nor peals the thunder.
id yet in happier spheres they cannot need thee
So much as we do with our weight of woe;
rhaps they would not tend, perhaps not heed thee,
And thou wouldst lonely and neglected grow:
id He who is all wise, He hath decreed thee
To gladden earth and cheer all hearts below.
17 *April* 1847.

SPRING QUIET

GONE were but the Winter,
Come were but the Spring,
I would go to a covert
Where the birds sing;
Where in the whitethorn
Singeth a thrush,
And a robin sings
In the holly-bush.

Full of fresh scents
Are the budding boughs
Arching high over
A cool green house;

Full of sweet scents,
And whispering air
Which sayeth softly:
'We spread no snare;

'Here dwell in safety,
Here dwell alone,
With a clear stream
And a mossy stone.

'Here the sun shineth
Most shadily;
Here is heard an echo
Of the far sea,
Though far off it be.'

Towards May 1847.

I HAVE FOUGHT A GOOD FIGHT

'WHO art thou that comest with a steadfast face
Through the hushed arena to the burying-place?'
'I am one whose footprints marked upon the sand
Cry in blood for vengeance on a guilty land.'

'How are these thy garments white as whitest snow
Though thy blood hath touched them in its overflow?'

'My blood cannot stain them, nor
my tears make white;
One than I more mighty, He hath
made them bright.'

'Say, do thy wounds pain thee open
every one,
Wounds that now are glowing clearer
than the sun?'
'Nay, they are my gladness un-
alloyed by grief;
Like a desert-fountain, or a long
relief.'

'When the lion had thee in his
deadly clasp,
Was there then no terror in thy
stifled gasp?'
'Though I felt the crushing, and
the grinding teeth,
He was with me ever, He who
comforteth.'

'Didst thou hear the shouting, as
of a great flood,
Crying out for vengeance, crying out
for blood?'
'I heard it in silence, and was not
afraid,
While for the mad people silently I
prayed.'

'Did their hate not move thee? art
thou heedless then
Of the fear of children and the curse
of men?'
'God looked down upon me from
the heaven above,
And I did not tremble, happy in
His love.'

July 1847.

WISHES

Oh would that I were very far away
Among the lanes, with hedges all
around,
Happily listening to the dreamy
sound
Of distant sheep-bells, smelling the
new hay
And all the wild flowers scattered
in my way:
Or would that I were lying on
some mound
Where shade and butterflies and
thyme abound,
Beneath the trees, upon a sunny day:
Or would I strolled beside the mighty
sea—
The sea before, and the tall cliffs
behind;
While winds from the warm south
might tell to me
How health and joy for all men
are designed:—
But, be I where I may, would I had
thee,
And heard thy gentle voice, my
Mother kind.

22 *July* 1847.

THE DREAM

Rest, rest; the troubled breast
Panteth evermore for rest:—
Be it sleep or be it death,
Rest is all it coveteth.

Tell me, dost thou remember the
old time
We sat together by that sunny
stream,
And dreamed our happiness was
too sublime
Only to be a dream?

Gazing, till steadfast gazing made us blind,
We watched the fishes leaping at their play;
Thinking our love too tender and too kind
Ever to pass away.

And some of all our thoughts were true at least
What time we thought together by that stream;
Thy happiness has evermore increased,—
My love was not a dream.

And, now that thou art gone, I often sit
On its green margin, for thou once wert there;
And see the clouds that, floating over it,
Darken the quiet air.

Yes oftentimes I sit beside it now,
Hearkening the wavelets ripple o'er the sands;
Until again I hear thy whispered vow
And feel thy pressing hands.

Then the bright sun seems to stand still in heaven,
The stream sings gladly as it onward flows,
The rushes grow more green, the grass more even,
Blossoms the budding rose.

I say: 'It is a joy-dream; I will take it;
He is not gone—he will return to me.'
What found'st thou in my heart that thou shouldst break it?—
How have I injured thee?

Oh I am weary of life's passing show,
Its pageant and its pain.
I would I could lie down lone in my woe,
Ne'er to rise up again;
I would I could lie down where none might know;
For truly love is vain.

Truly love's vain; but oh how vainer still
Is that which is not love, but seems!
Concealed indifference, a covered ill,
A very dream of dreams.

1847.

ELEANOR

CHERRY-RED her mouth was,
Morning-blue her eye,
Lady-slim her little waist
Rounded prettily;
And her sweet smile of gladness
Made every heart rejoice:
But sweeter even than her smile
The tones were of her voice.

Sometimes she spoke, sometimes she sang;
And evermore the sound
Floated, a dreamy melody,
Upon the air around;
As though a wind were singing
Far up beside the sun,
Till sound and warmth and glory
Were blended all in one.

Her hair was long and golden,
And clustered unconfined
Over a forehead high and white
That spoke a noble mind.
Her little hand, her little foot,
Were ready evermore
To hurry forth to meet a friend;
She smiling at the door.

But if she sang or if she spoke,
'Twas music soft and grand,
As though a distant singing sea
Broke on a tuneful strand;
As though a blessed Angel
Were singing a glad song,
Halfway between the earth and heaven
Joyfully borne along.

30 *July* 1847.

ISIDORA

LOVE, whom I have loved too well,
Turn thy face away from me;
For I heed nor heaven nor hell
While mine eyes can look on thee.
Do not answer, do not speak,
For thy voice can make me weak.

I must choose 'twixt God and man,
And I dare not hesitate:
Oh how little is life's span,
And Eternity how great!
Go out from me; for I fear
Mine own strength while thou art here.

Husband, leave me; but know this:
I would gladly give my soul
So that thine might dwell in bliss
Free from the accurst control,
So that thou mightest go hence
In a hopeful penitence.

Yea from hell I would look up,
And behold thee in thy place,
Drinking of the living cup,
With the joy-look on thy face,
And the light that shines alone
From the glory of the Throne.

But how could my endless loss
Be thine everlasting gain?
Shall thy palm grow from my cross?
Shall thine ease be in my pain?
Yea thine own soul witnesseth
Thy life is not in my death.

It were vain that I should die—
That we thus should perish both;
Thou wouldst gain no peace thereby;
And in truth I should be loth
By the loss of my salvation
To increase thy condemnation.

Little infant, his and mine,
Would that I were as thou art;
Nothing breaks that sleep of thine,
And ah nothing breaks thy heart;
And thou knowest naught of strife,
The heart's death for the soul's life.

None misdoubt thee, none misdeem
Of thy wishes and thy will.
All thy thoughts are what they seem,
Very pure and very still;
And thou fearest not the voice
That once made thy heart rejoice.

Oh how calm thou art, my child!
I could almost envy thee.
Thou has neither wept nor smiled,
Thou that sleepest quietly.
Would I also were at rest
With the one that I love best.

Husband, go. I dare not hearken
To thy words or look upon
Those despairing eyes that darken
Down on me—But he is gone!
Nay, come back, and be my fate
As thou wilt!—It is too late.

I have conquered; it is done,
Yea the death-struggle is o'er,
And the hopeless quiet won:—
I shall see his face no more:—
And mine eyes are waxing dim
Now they cannot look on him.

And my heart-pulses are growing
Very weak, and through my whole
Life-blood a slow chill is going :—
Blessed Saviour, take my soul
To Thy Paradise and care :—
Paradise, will he be there ?
9 *August* 1847.

ZARA

Now the pain beginneth and the word is spoken ;—
Hark unto the tolling of the church-yard chime !—
Once my heart was gladsome, now my heart is broken,—
Once my love was noble, now it is a crime.

But the fear is over ; yea what now shall pain me ?
Arm thee in thy sorrow, O most desolate !
Weariness and weakness, these shall now sustain me,—
Pride and bitter grieving, burning love and hate.

Yea the fear is over, the strong fear and trembling ;
I can doubt no longer, he is gone indeed.
Rend thy hair, lost woman, weep without dissembling ;
The heart torn forth from it, shall the breast not bleed ?

Happy she who looketh on his beauty's glory !
Happy she who listeneth to his gentle word !
Yet, O happy maiden, sorrow lies before thee ;
Greeting hath been given, parting must be heard.

He shall leave thee also, he who now hath left me,
With a weary spirit and an aching heart ;
Thou shalt be bereaved by him who hath bereft me ;
Thou hast sucked the honey,—feel the stinging's smart.

Let the cold gaze on him, let the heartless hear him,
For he shall not hurt them, they are safe in sooth :
But let loving women shun that man and fear him,
Full of cruel kindness and devoid of ruth.

When ye call upon him, hope for no replying ;
When ye gaze upon him, think not he will look ;
Hope not for his pity when your heart is sighing ;
Such another, waiting, weeping, he forsook.

Hath the heaven no thunder wherewith to denounce him ?
Hath the heaven no lightning wherewith to chastise ?
O my heart and spirit, O my soul, renounce him
Who hath called for vengeance from the distant skies :

Vengeance which pursues thee, vengeance which shall find thee,
Crushing thy false spirit, scathing thy fair limb :—
O ye thunders, deafen, O ye lightnings, blind me ;
Winds and storms from heaven, strike me but spare him !

I forgive thee, dearest, cruel, I forgive thee ;-
May thy cup of sorrow be poured out for me ;
Though the dregs be bitter, yet they shall not grieve me,
Knowing that I drink them, O my love, for thee.

1847.

THE NOVICE

I LOVE one and he loveth me :
Who sayeth this ? who deemeth this ?
And is this thought a cause of bliss,
Or source of misery ?

The loved may die, or he may change :
And if he die thou art bereft ;
Or if he alter nought is left
Save life that seemeth strange.

A weary life, a hopeless life,
Full of all ill and fear-oppressed ;
A weary life that looks for rest
Alone after death's strife.

And love's joy hath no quiet even ;
It evermore is variable.
Its gladness is like war in hell
More than repose in heaven.

Yea it is as a poison-cup
That holds one quick fire-draught within ;
For when the life seems to begin
The slow death looketh up.

Then bring me to a solitude
Where love may neither come nor go ;
Where very peaceful waters flow,
And roots are found for food ;
Where the wild honey-bee booms by,
And trees and bushes freely give
Ripe fruit and nuts : there I would live,
And there I fain would die.

There autumn leaves may make my grave,
And little birds sing over it ;
And there cool twilight winds may flit
And shadowy branches wave.

4 *September* 1847

IMMALEE

I GATHER thyme upon the sunny hills,
And its pure fragrance ever gladdens me,
And in my mind having tranquillity
I smile to see how my green basket fills.
And by clear streams I gather daffodils ;
And in dim woods find out the cherry-tree,
And take its fruit and the wild strawberry
And nuts and honey ; and live free from ills.
I dwell on the green earth, 'neath the blue sky,
Birds are my friends, and leaves my rustling roof :
The deer are not afraid of me, and I
Hear the wild goat, and hail its hastening hoof ;
The squirrels sit perked as I pass them by,
And even the watchful hare stands not aloof.

21 *September* 1847.

HEART'S CHILL BETWEEN

I DID not chide him, though I knew
That he was false to me.
Chide the exhaling of the dew,
The ebbing of the sea,
The fading of a rosy hue—
But not inconstancy.

Why strive for love when love is o'er-
Why bind a restive heart?
He never knew the pain I bore
In saying—'We must part,
Let us be friends and nothing more':
Oh woman's shallow art!

But it is over, it is done:
I hardly heed it now:
So many weary years have run
Since then I think not how
Things might have been—but greet each one
With an unruffled brow.

What time I am where others be
My heart seems very calm
Stone-calm: but, if all go from me,
There comes a vague alarm,
A shrinking in the memory
From some forgotten harm.

And often through the long long night,
Waking when none are near,
I feel my heart beat fast with fright,
Yet know not what I fear:
Oh how I long to see the light,
And the sweet birds to hear!

To have the sun upon my face,
To look up through the trees,
To walk forth in the open space
And listen to the breeze,—
And not to dream the burial-place
Is clogging my weak knees.

Sometimes I can nor weep nor pray,
But am half stupefied;
And then all those who see me say
Mine eyes are opened wide
And that my wits seem gone astray:—
Ah would that I had died!

Would I could die and be at peace—
Or living could forget!
My grief nor grows nor doth decrease,
But ever is. And yet
Methinks now that all this shall cease
Before the sun shall set.

22 *September* 1847.

LADY ISABELLA

Heart warm as summer, fresh as spring,
Gracious as autumn's harvesting,
Pure as the winter's snows; as white
A hand as lilies in sunlight;
Eyes glorious as a midnight star;
Hair shining as the chestnuts are;
A step firm and majestical;
A voice singing and musical;
A soft expression, kind address;
Tears for another's heaviness;
Bright looks; an action full of grace;
A perfect form, a perfect face;
All these become a woman well,
And these had Lady Isabel.

27 *September* 1847.

NIGHT AND DEATH

Now the sunlit hours are o'er,
Rise up from thy shadowy shore,
Happy Night, whom Chaos bore.

Better is the peaceful treasure
Of thy musings without measure
Than the day's unquiet pleasure.

Bring the holy moon; so pale
She herself seems but a veil
For the sun, where no clouds sail.

Bring the stars, thy progeny;
Each a little lamp on high
To light up an azure sky.

Sounds incomprehensible
In the shining planets dwell
Of thy sister Queen to tell.

Of that sister Nature saith
She hath power o'er life and breath:
And her name is written Death.

She is fairer far than thou;
Grief her head can never bow,
Joy is stamped upon her brow.

She is full of gentleness,
And of faith and hope; distress
Finds in her forgetfulness.

In her arms who lieth down
Never more is seen to frown,
Though he wore a thorny crown.

Whoso sigheth in unrest,
If his head lean on her breast,
Witnesseth she is the best.

All the riches of the earth,
Weighed by her, are nothing worth:
She is the eternal birth.

In her treasure-house are found
Stored abundantly around
Almsdeeds done without a sound;

Long forbearance; patient will;
Fortitude in midst of ill;
Hope, when even fear grew still;

Kindness given again for hate;
Hearts resigned though desolate;
Meekness, which is truly great;

Bitter tears of penitence;
Changeless love's omnipotence:—
And nought lacketh recompense.

In her house no tainted thing
Winneth any entering;
There the poor have comforting.

There they wait a little time
Till the Angel-uttered chime
Sound the eternal matin-prime.

Then, upraised in joyfulness,
They shall know her, and confess
She is blessed and doth bless.

When earth's fleeting day is flown,
All created things shall own,
Death is Life, and Death alone.

28 *September* 1847.

DEATH'S CHILL BETWEEN

CHIDE not: let me breathe a little,
For I shall not mourn him long;
Though the life-cord was so brittle,
The love-cord was very strong.
I would wake a little space
Till I find a sleeping-place.

You can go,—I shall not weep;
You can go unto your rest.
My heart-ache is all too deep,
And too sore my throbbing breast.
Can sobs be, or angry tears,
Where are neither hopes nor fears?

Though with you I am alone
And must be so everywhere,
I will make no useless moan,—
None shall say, 'She could not bear.'
While life lasts I will be strong,
But I shall not struggle long.

Listen, listen!—Everywhere
A low voice is calling me,
And a step is on the stair,
And one comes you do not see.
Listen, listen!—Evermore
A dim hand knocks at the door.

Hear me! He is come again,
My own dearest is come back.
Bring him in from the cold rain;
Bring wine, and let nothing lack.
Thou and I will rest together,
Love, until the sunny weather.

I will shelter thee from harm,
Hide thee from all heaviness.
Come to me, and keep thee warm
By my side in quietness.
I will lull thee to thy sleep
With sweet songs: we will not weep.

Who hath talked of weeping?—Yet
There is something at my heart
Gnawing, I would fain forget,
And an aching and a smart.—
Ah, my mother, 'tis in vain,
For he is not come again.

29 *September* 1847.

THE LOTUS-EATERS

Ulysses to Penelope

In a far distant land they dwell,
Incomprehensible,
Who love the shadow more than light,
More than the sun the moon,
Cool evening more than noon,
Pale silver more than gold that glitters bright.
A dark cloud overhangs their land
Like a mighty hand,
Never moving from above it;
A cool shade and moist and dim,
With a twilight purple rim,
And they love it.
And sometimes it giveth rain,
But soon it ceaseth as before,
And earth drieth up again,
Then the dews rise more and more,
Till it filleth, dropping o'er;
But no forked lightnings flit,
And no thunders roll in it.
Through the land a river flows,
With a sleepy sound it goes:
Such a drowsy noise, in sooth,
Those who will not listen hear not:
But, if one is wakeful, fear not—
It shall lull him to repose,
Bringing back the dreams of youth.
Hemlock groweth, poppy bloweth,
In the fields where no man moweth:
And the vine is full of wine
And are full of milk the kine,
And the hares are all secure,
And the birds are wild no more,
And the forest-trees wax old,
And winds stir, or hot or cold,—
And yet no man taketh care,
All things resting everywhere.

7 *October* 1847.

SONNET

From the Psalms

All through the livelong night I lay awake,
Watering my couch with tears of heaviness.
None stood beside me in my sore distress: —
Then cried I to my heart: If thou wilt, break,
But be thou still; no moaning will I make,
Nor ask man's help, nor kneel that he may bless.
So I kept silence in my haughtiness,
Till lo the fire was kindled, and I spake –
Saying: Oh that I had wings like to a dove,
Then would I flee away and be at rest:
I would not pray for friends or hope or love,
But still the weary throbbing of my breast:
And, gazing on the changeless heavens above,
Witness that such a quietness is best.

7 November 1847.

SONG

The stream moaneth as it floweth,
The wind sigheth as it bloweth,
Leaves are falling, Autumn goeth,
Winter cometh back again;
And the air is very chilly,
And the country rough and hilly,
And I shiver in the rain.
Who will help me? who will love me?
Heaven sets forth no light above me:
Ancient memories reprove me,
Long-forgotten feelings move me,
I am full of heaviness.
Earth is cold, too cold the sea:
Whither shall I turn and flee?
Is there any hope for me?
Any ease for my heart-aching,
Any sleep that hath no waking,
Any night without day-breaking,
Any rest from weariness?

Hark the wind is answering:
Hark the running stream replieth:
There is rest for him that dieth:
In the grave whoever lieth
Nevermore hath sorrowing.
Holy slumber, holy quiet,
Close the eyes and still the riot:
And the brain forgets its thought,
And the heart forgets its beating,
Earth and earthly things are fleeting;
There is what all men have sought –
Long unchangeable repose,
Lulling us from many woes.

7 November 1847.

THE WORLD'S HARMONIES

Oh listen, listen, for the Earth
Hath silent melody:
Green grasses are her lively chords,
And blossoms: and each tree,
Chestnut and oak and sycamore,
Makes solemn harmony.

Oh listen, listen, for the Sea
Is calling unto us:
Her notes are the broad liquid waves
Mighty and glorious.
Lo the first man and the last man
Hath heard, shall hearken thus.

The Sun on which men cannot look,
Its splendour is so strong,
Which waketh life and giveth life,
Rolling in light along,
From day-dawn to dim eventide
Sings the eternal song.

And the Moon taketh up the hymn,
And the Stars answer all:
And all the Clouds and all the Winds
And all the Dews that fall
And Frost and fertilizing Rain
Are mutely musical.

Fishes and Beasts and feathered Fowl
Swell the eternal chaunt,
That riseth through the lower air,
Over the rainbow slant,
Up through the unseen palace-gates,
Fearlessly jubilant.

Before the everlasting Throne
It is acceptable:
It hath no pause or faltering:
The Angels know it well:
Yea in the highest heaven of heavens
Its sound is audible.

Yet than the voice of the whole World
There is a sweeter voice,
That maketh all the Cherubim
And Seraphim rejoice:
That all the blessed Spirits hail
With undivided choice:

That crieth at the golden door
And gaineth entrance in:
That the palm-branch and radiant crown
And glorious throne may win:
The lowly prayer of a Poor Man
Who turneth from his sin.

[illegible] November 1847.

THE LAST ANSWER

(Written to Bouts-rimés.)

She turned round to me with her steadfast eyes,
'I tell you I have looked upon the dead;
Have kissed the brow and the cold lips,' she said;
'Have called upon the sleeper to arise'
He loved me, yet he stirred not: on this wise,
Not bowing in weak agony my head,
But all too sure of what life is, to dread,
Learned I that love and hope are fallacies.'
She gazed quite calmly on me: and I felt
Awed and astonished and almost afraid:
For what was I to have admonished her?
Then, being full of doubt and fear, I knelt,
And tears came to my eyes even as I prayed:
But she meanwhile only grew statelier.

[illegible] December 1847.

DEVOTIONAL POEMS

I DO SET MY BOW IN THE CLOUD

THE roses bloom too late for me
The violets I shall not see:
Even the snowdrops will not come
Till I have passed from home to home:
From home on earth to home in heaven,
Here penitent and there forgiven.

Mourn not, my Father, that I seek
One who is strong when I am weak.
Through the dark passage, verily,
His rod and staff shall comfort me:
He shall support me in the strife
Of death that dieth into life:
He shall support me, He receive
My soul when I begin to live,
And more than I can ask for give.

He from the heaven-gates built above
Hath looked on me in perfect love,
From the heaven-walls to me He calls
To come and dwell within those walls:
With Cherubim and Seraphim
And Angels: yea, beholding Him.

His care for me is more than mine,
Father; His love is more than thine.
Sickness and death I have from thee,
From Him have immortality.
He giveth gladness where He will,
Yet chasteneth His beloved still.

Then tell me: is it not enough
To feel that, when the path is rough
And the sky dark and the rain cold,
His promise standeth as of old?
When heaven and earth have past away
Only His righteous word shall stay,
And we shall know His will is best.
Behold: He is a haven-rest,
A sheltering-rock, a hiding-place,
For runners steadfast in the race;
Who, toiling for a little space,
Had light through faith when sight grew dim,
And offered all their world to Him.

December 1849.

DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY

'TELL me: doth it not grieve thee to lie here,
And see the cornfields waving not for thee,
Just in the waking summer of the year?'
'I fade from earth, and lo along with me
The season that I love will fade away:
How should I look for autumn longingly?'
'Yet autumn beareth fruit whilst day by day
The leaves grow browner with a mellow hue,
Declining to a beautiful decay.'
'Decay is death, with which I have to do,
And see it near: behold, it is more good
Than length of days and length of sorrow too.'

'But thy heart hath not dwelt in solitude;
Many have loved and love thee: dost not heed
Free love, for which in vain have others sued?'
'I thirst for love, love is mine only need,
Love such as none hath borne me nor can bear,
True love that prompteth thought and word and deed.'
'Here it is not: why seek it other where?
Nay, bow thy head, and own that on this earth
Are many goodly things and sweet and fair.'
'There are tears in man's laughter: in his mirth
There is a fearful forward look; and lo
An infant's cry gives token of its birth.'
'I mark the ocean of Time ebb and flow!
He who hath care one day and is perplext
To-morrow may have joy in place of woe.'
'Evil becomes good: and to this annext
Good becomes evil: speak of it no more:
My heart is wearied and my spirit vext.'
'Is there no place it grieves thee to give o'er?
Is there no home thou lov'st, and so wouldst fain
Tarry a little longer at the door?'
'I must go hence and not return again:
But the friends whom I have shall come to me,
And dwell together with me safe from pain.'
'Where is that mansion mortals cannot see?
Behold, the tombs are full of worms: shalt thou
Rise thence and soar up skywards gloriously?'
'Even as the planets shine we know not how,
We shall be raised then, changed yet still the same
Being made like Christ, yea being as He is now.'
'Thither thou go'st whence no man ever came:
Death's voyagers return not, and in death
There is no room for speech or sign or fame.'
'There is room for repose that comforteth,
There weariness is not: and there content
Broodeth for ever, and hope hovereth.'
'When the stars fall and when the graves are rent,
Shalt thou have safety? shalt thou look for life
When the great light of the broad sun is spent?'
'These elements shall consummate their strife,
This heaven and earth shall shrivel like a scroll,
And then be re-created, beauty-rife.'
'Who shall abide it when from pole to pole
The world's foundations shall be overthrown?
Who shall abide to scan the perfect whole?'

'He who hath strength given to him, not his own:
He who hath faith in that which is not seen,
And patient hope: who trusts in Love alone.'
'Yet thou—the death-struggle must intervene
Ere thou win rest: think better of it: think
Of all that is and shall be and hath been.'
'The cup my Father giveth me to drink,
Shall I not take it meekly? though my heart
Tremble a moment, it shall never shrink.'
'Satan will wrestle with thee when thou art
In the last agony; and Death will bring
Sins to remembrance ere thy spirit part.'
'In that great hour of unknown suffering
God shall be with me, and His arm made bare
Shall fight for me; yea, under neath His wing
I shall lie safe at rest and freed from care.'

20 *February* 1848.

SAMUEL.

I WATCHED a rosebud very long
Brought on by dew and sun and shower,
Waiting to see the perfect flower:
Then, when I thought it should be strong,
It opened at the matin hour
And fell at evensong.

I watched a nest from day to day,
A green nest full of pleasant shade,
Wherein three speckled eggs were laid:
But when they should have hatched in May,
The two old birds had grown afraid
Or tired, and flew away.

Then in my wrath I broke the bough
That I had tended so with care,
Hoping its scent should fill the air;
I crushed the eggs, not heeding how
Their ancient promise had been fair:
I would have vengeance now.

But the dead branch spoke from the sod,
And the eggs answered me again:
Because we failed dost thou complain?
Is thy wrath just?—And where is God,
Who waiteth for thy fruits in vain,
Should also take the rod?

7 *January* 1849.

SWEET DEATH

THE sweetest blossoms die.
And so it was that, going day by day
Unto the Church to praise and pray,
And crossing the green churchyard thoughtfully,
I saw how on the graves the flowers
Shed their fresh leaves in showers,
And how their perfume rose up to the sky
Before it passed away.

The youngest blossoms die.
They die and fall and nourish the rich earth
From which they lately had their birth.
Sweet life, but sweeter death that passeth by
And is as though it had not been:
All colours turn to green:
The bright hues vanish, and the odours fly,
The grass hath lasting worth.

And youth and beauty die.
So be it, O my God, Thou God of Truth:
Better than beauty and than youth
Are Saints and Angels, a glad company:
And Thou, O Lord, our Rest and Base,
Art better far than these.
Why should we shrink from our full harvest? why
Prefer to gleam with Ruth?

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

THANK God, thank God, we do believe
Thank God that this is Christmas Eve,
Even as we kneel upon this day,
Even so, the ancient legends say,
Nearly two thousand years ago
The stalled ox knelt, and even so
The ass knelt full of praise, which they
Could not express, while we can pray,
Thank God, thank God, for Christ was born
Ages ago, as on this morn,
In the snow-season undefiled
God came to earth a little child:
He put His ancient glory by
To live for us and then to die.

How shall we thank God? How shall we
Thank Him and praise Him worthily?
What will He have who loved us thus?
What presents will He take from us?
Will He take gold, or precious heap
Of gems? or shall we rather steep
The air with incense, or bring myrrh?
What man will be our messenger
To go to Him and ask His will?
Which having learned, we will fulfil
Though He choose all we most prefer:
What man will be our messenger?

Thank God, thank God, the Man is found,
Sure-footed, knowing well the ground.
He knows the road, for this the way
He travelled once, as on this day.
He is our Messenger beside,
He is our door and path and Guide:
He also is our Offering:
He is the gift that we must bring.
Let us kneel down with one accord
And render thanks unto the Lord:
For unto us a Child is born
Upon this happy Christmas morn:
For unto us a Son is given,
Firstborn of God and Heir of Heaven.

FOR ADVENT

SWEET sweet sound of distant waters, falling
On a parched and thirsty plain:

Sweet sweet song of soaring skylark, calling
On the sun to shine again :
Perfume of the rose, only the fresher
For past fertilizing rain :
Pearls amid the sea, a hidden treasure
For some daring hand to gain :—
Better, dearer than all these
Is the earth beneath the trees :
Of a much more priceless worth
Is the old brown common earth.

Little snow-white lamb, piteously bleating
For thy mother far away :
Saddest sweetest nightingale, retreating
With thy sorrow from the day :
Weary fawn whom night has overtaken,
From the herd gone quite astray :
Dove whose nest was rifled and forsaken
In the budding month of May :—
Roost upon the leafy trees,
Lie on earth and take your ease :
Death is better far than birth :
You shall turn again to earth.

Listen to the never-pausing murmur
Of the waves that fret the shore :
See the ancient pine that stands the firmer
For the storm-shock that it bore :
And the moon her silver chalice filling
With light from the great sun's store :
And the stars which deck our temple's ceiling
As the flowers deck its floor :
Look and hearken while you may,
For these things shall pass away :
All these things shall fail and cease :
Let us wait the end in peace.

Let us wait the end in peace, for truly
That shall cease which was before :
Let us see our lamps are lighted, duly
Fed with oil nor wanting more :
Let us pray while yet the Lord will hear us,
For the time is almost o'er :
Yea, the end of all is very near us :
Yea, the Judge is at the door.
Let us pray now, while we may :
It will be too late to pray
When the quick and dead shall all
Rise at the last trumpet-call.

12 *March* 1849.

TWO PURSUITS

A VOICE said, 'Follow, follow' : and I rose
And followed far into the dreamy night,
Turning my back upon the pleasant light.
It led me where the bluest water flows,
And would not let me drink : where the corn grows
I dared not pause, but went uncheered by sight
Or touch : until at length in evil plight
It left me, wearied out with many woes.
Some time I sat as one bereft of sense :
But soon another voice from very far
Called, 'Follow, follow' : and I rose again.

Now on my night has dawned a
blessed star :
Kind steady hands my sinking
steps sustain,
nd will not leave me till I shall go
hence.
12 *April* 1849.

ONE CERTAINTY

ANITY of vanities, the Preacher
saith,
All things are vanity. The eye
and ear
Cannot be filled with what they
see and hear.
ike early dew, or like the sudden
breath
f wind, or like the grass that
withereth,
Is man, tossed to and fro by hope
and fear :
So little joy hath he, so little
cheer,
ll all things end in the long dust
of death.
o-day is still the same as yesterday,
To-morrow also even as one of
them ;
And there is nothing new under
the sun :
Until the ancient race of Time
be run,
The old thorns shall grow out of
the old stem,
nd morning shall be cold and
twilight grey.
2 *June* 1849.

A TESTIMONY

SAID of laughter : it is vain.
Of mirth I said : what profits it ?
Therefore I found a book, and writ
Therein how ease and also pain,
How health and sickness, every one
Is vanity beneath the sun.

Man walks in a vain shadow ; he
Disquieteth himself in vain.
The things that were shall be
again ;
The rivers do not fill the sea,
But turn back to their secret source ;
The winds too turn upon their course.

Our treasures moth and rust corrupt,
Or thieves break through and steal,
or they
Make themselves wings and fly
áway.
One man made merry as he supped,
Nor guessed how when that night
grew dim
His soul would be required of him.

We build our houses on the sand
Comely withoutside and within ;
But when the winds and rains begin
To beat on them, they cannot stand :
They perish, quickly overthrown,
Loose from the very basement stone.

All things are vanity, I said :
Yea vanity of vanities.
The rich man dies ; and the poor
dies :
The worm feeds sweetly on the dead.
Whate'er thou lackest, keep this
trust :
All in the end shall have but dust :

The one inheritance, which best
And worst alike shall find and
share :
The wicked cease from troubling
there,

And there the weary be at rest;
There all the wisdom of the wise
Is vanity of vanities.

Man flourishes as a green leaf,
And as a leaf doth pass away;
Or as a shade that cannot stay
And leaves no track, his course is brief:
Yet man doth hope and fear and plan
Till he is dead:—oh foolish man!

Our eyes cannot be satisfied
With seeing, nor our ears be filled
With hearing: yet we plant and build
And buy and make our borders wide;
We gather wealth, we gather care,
But know not who shall be our heir.

Why should we hasten to arise
So early, and so late take rest?
Our labour is not good; our best
Hopes fade; our heart is stayed on lies.
Verily, we sow wind; and we
Shall reap the whirlwind, verily.

He who hath little shall not lack;
He who hath plenty shall decay:
Our fathers went; we pass away;
Our children follow on our track:
So generations fail, and so
They are renewed and come and go.

The earth is fattened with our dead;
She swallows more and doth not cease:
Therefore her wine and oil increase
And her sheaves are not numbered;
Therefore her plants are green, and all
Her pleasant trees lusty and tall.

Therefore the maidens cease to sing,
And the young men are very sad;
Therefore the sowing is not glad,
And mournful is the harvesting.
Of high and low, of great and small,
Vanity is the lot of all.

A King dwelt in Jerusalem;
He was the wisest man on earth;
He had all riches from his birth,
And pleasures till he tired of them;
Then, having tested all things, he
Witnessed that all are vanity.

31 *August* 1849.

SONGS FOR STRANGERS AND PILGRIMS

(*From* 2 *March* 1850 *to before* 1893.)

'Her Seed; It shall bruise thy head.'

ASTONISHED Heaven looked on when man was made,
When fallen man reproved seemed half forgiven;
Surely that oracle of hope, first said,
Astonished Heaven.

Even so while one by one lost souls are shriven,
A mighty multitude of quickened dead;
Christ's love outnumbering ten times sevenfold seven.

Even so while man still tosses high his head,
While still the All-Holy Spirit's strife is striven;—
Till one last trump shake earth, and undismayed
Astonished Heaven.

Before 1887.

Judge nothing before the time.

LOVE understands the mystery, whereof
We can but spell a surface history:
Love knows, remembers: let us trust in Love:
Love understands the mystery.

Love weighs the event, the long pre-history,
Measures the depth beneath, the height above,
The mystery, with the ante-mystery.

To love and to be grieved befits a dove
Silently telling her bead-history:
Trust all to Love, be patient and approve:
Love understands the mystery.
Before 1886.

HOW great is little man!
Sun, moon, and stars respond to him,
Shine or grow dim
Harmonious with his span.

How little is great man!
More changeable than changeful moon,
Nor half in tune
With Heaven's harmonious plan.

Ah rich man! ah poor man!
Make ready for the testing day
When wastes away
What bears not fire or fan.

Thou heir of all things, man,
Pursue the saints by heavenward track:
They looked not back;
Run thou, as erst they ran.

Little and great is man:
Great if he will, or if he will
A pigmy still;
For what he will he can.
Before 1893.

MAN'S life is but a working day
Whose tasks are set aright:
A time to work, a time to pray,
And then a quiet night.
And then, please God, a quiet night
Where palms are green and robes are white;
A long-drawn breath, a balm for sorrow,
And all things lovely on the morrow.
19 *March* 1864.

IF not with hope of life,
Begin with fear of death:
Strive the tremendous life-long strife
Breath after breath.

Bleed on beneath the rod;
Weep on until thou see;
Turn fear and hope to love of God
Who loveth thee.

Turn all to love, poor soul;
Be love thy watch and ward;
Be love thy starting-point, thy goal,
And thy reward.
Before 1893.

The day is at hand.

WATCH yet a while,
Weep till that day shall dawn when thou shalt smile:
Watch till the day
When all save only Love shall pass away.

Then Love rejoicing shall forget to weep,
Shall hope or fear no more, or watch or sleep,
But only love and stint not, deep beyond deep.
Now we sow love in tears, but then shall reap.
Have patience as True Love's own flock of sheep:
Have patience with His Love
Who served for us, Who reigns for us above.

Before 1886.

Endure hardness.

A COLD wind stirs the blackthorn
To burgeon and to blow,
Besprinkling half-green hedges
With flakes and sprays of snow.

Thro' coldness and thro' keenness,
Dear hearts, take comfort so:
Somewhere or other doubtless
These make the blackthorn blow.

Before 1886.

'Whither the Tribes go up, even the Tribes of the Lord.'

LIGHT is our sorrow for it ends to-morrow,
Light is our death which cannot hold us fast;
So brief a sorrow can be scarcely sorrow,
Or death be death so quickly past.

One night, no more, of pain that turns to pleasure,
One night, no more, of weeping weeping sore;
And then the heaped-up measure beyond measure,
In quietness for evermore.

Our face is set like flint against our trouble,
Yet many things there are which comfort us;
This bubble is a rainbow-coloured bubble,
This bubble-life tumultuous.

Our sails are set to cross the tossing river,
Our face is set to reach Jerusalem;
We toil awhile, but then we rest for ever,
Sing with all Saints and rest with them.

Circa 1877.

WHERE never tempest heaveth,
Nor sorrow grieveth,
Nor death bereaveth,
Nor hope deceiveth,
Sleep.

Where never shame bewaileth,
Nor serpent traileth,
Nor death prevaileth,
Nor harvest faileth,
Reap.

Before 1893.

MARVEL of marvels, if I myself shall behold
With mine own eyes my King in His city of gold;
Where the least of lambs is spotless white in the fold,
Where the least and last of saints in spotless white is stoled,
Where the dimmest head beyond a moon is aureoled.
O saints, my beloved, now moulder-ing to mould in the mould,
Shall I see you lift your heads, see your cerements unrolled,

See with these very eyes? who now
in darkness and cold
Tremble for the midnight cry, the
rapture, the tale untold,
'The Bridegroom cometh, cometh,
His Bride to enfold.'

Cold it is, my beloved, since your
funeral bell was tolled:
Cold it is, O my King, how cold
alone on the wold.

Before 1893.

What is that to thee? follow thou Me.

Lie still, my restive heart, lie still:
God's Word to thee saith, 'Wait
and bear.'
The good which He appoints is good,
The good which He denies were ill:
Yea, subtle comfort is thy care,
Thy hurt a help not understood.

'Friend, go up higher,' to one: to
one,
Friend, 'enter thou My joy,' He
saith:
To one, 'Be faithful unto death.'
For some a wilderness doth flower,
Or day's work in one hour is done:—
But thou, couldst thou not watch
one hour?'

Lord, I had chosen another lot,
But then I had not chosen well:
Thy choice and only Thine is good:
No different lot, search heaven or
hell,
Had blessed me, fully understood;
None other, which Thou orderest not.

Before 1886.

'Worship God.'

LORD, if Thy word had been
'Worship Me not,
For I than thou am holier: draw
not near':
We had besieged Thy Face with
prayer and tear
And manifold abasement in our
lot,
Our crooked ground, our thorned
and thistled plot;
Envious of flawless Angels in their
sphere,
Envious of brutes, and envious of
the mere
Unliving and undying unbegot.
But now Thou hast said, 'Worship
Me, and give
Thy heart to Me, My child'; now
therefore we
Think twice before we stoop to
worship Thee:
We proffer half a heart while life
is strong
And strung with hope; so sweet it
is to live!
Wilt Thou not wait? Yea, Thou
hast waited long.

Before 1893.

'Afterward he repented, and went.'

LORD, when my heart was whole I
kept it back
And grudged to give it Thee.
Now then that it is broken, must I
lack
Thy kind word 'Give it Me'?
Silence would be but just, and Thou
art just.
Yet since I lie here shattered in the
dust,
With still an eye to lift to Thee,
A broken heart to give,
I think that Thou wilt bid me live,
And answer 'Give it Me.'

Before 1886.

Are they not all Ministering Spirits?

LORD, whomsoever Thou shalt send to me,
Let that same be
Mine Angel predilect:
Veiled or unveiled, benignant or austere,
Aloof or near;
Thine, therefore mine, elect.

So may my soul nurse patience day by day,
Watch on and pray
Obedient and at peace;
Living a lonely life in hope, in faith;
Loving till death,
When life, not love, shall cease.

. . Lo, thou mine Angel with transfigured face
Brimful of grace,
Brimful of love for me!
Did I misdoubt thee all that weary while,
Thee with a smile
For me as I for thee?

Before 1893.

OUR life is long. Not so, wise Angels say
Who watch us waste it, trembling while they weigh
Against eternity one squandered day.

Our life is long. Not so, the Saints protest,
Filled full of consolation and of rest:
'Short ill, long good, one long unending best.'

Our life is long. Christ's word sounds different:
'Night cometh: no more work when day is spent.'
Repent and work to-day, work and repent.

Lord, make us like Thy Host who day nor night
Rest not from adoration, their delight,
Crying 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' in the height.

Lord, make us like Thy Saints who wait and long
Contented: bound in hope and freed from wrong,
They speed (may be) their vigil with a song.

Lord, make us like Thyself; for thirty-three
Slow years of toil seemed not too long to Thee,
That where Thou art there Thy Beloved might be.

Before 1886.

LORD, what have I to offer? sickening fear
And a heart-breaking loss.
Are these the cross Thou givest me? then dear
I will account this cross.

If this is all I have, accept even this
Poor priceless offering,
A quaking heart with all that therein is,
O Thou my thorn-crowned King.

Accept the whole, my God, accept my heart
And its own love within:

Wilt Thou accept us and not sift
apart?
—Only sift out my sin.
Before 1886.

JOY is but sorrow,
While we know
It ends to-morrow:—
Even so!
Joy with lifted veil
Shows a face as pale
As the fair changing moon so fair
and frail.

Pain is but pleasure,
If we know
It heaps up treasure:—
Even so!
Turn, transfigured Pain,
Sweetheart, turn again,
For fair thou art as moonrise after
rain.
Before 1886.

'CAN I know it?'—'Nay.'
'Shall I know it?'—'Yea,
When all mists have cleared away
For ever and aye.'—

'Why not then to-day?'—
'Who hath said thee nay?
Lift a hopeful heart and pray
In a humble way.'

'Other hearts are gay.'—
'Ask not joy to-day:
Toil to-day along thy way
Keeping grudge at bay.'—

'On a past May-day
Flowers pranked all the way;
Nightingales sang out their say
On a night of May.'

'Dost thou covet May
On an Autumn day?
Foolish memory saith its say
Of sweets past away.'

'Gone the bloom of May,
Autumn beareth bay:
Flowerless wreath for head grown
grey
Seemly were to-day.'

'Dost thou covet bay?
Ask it not to-day:
Rather for a palm-branch pray;
None will say thee nay.'
Before 1893.

When my heart is vexed I will complain.

'THE fields are white to harvest, look and see,
Are white abundantly.
The full-orbed harvest moon shines clear,
The harvest time draws near,
Be of good cheer.'

'Ah woe is me!
I have no heart for harvest time,
Grown sick with hope deferred from
chime to chime.'

'But Christ can give thee heart Who loveth thee:
Can set thee in the eternal ecstasy
Of His great jubilee:
Can give thee dancing heart and shining face,
And lips filled full of grace,
And pleasures as the rivers and the sea.
Who knocketh at His door
He welcomes evermore:
Kneel down before

That ever-open door
(The time is short) and smite
Thy breast, and pray with all thy
might.'

'What shall I say?'
'Nay, pray.
Tho' one but say "Thy Will be done,"
He hath not lost his day
At set of sun.'

Before 1880.

'Praying always.'

AFTER midnight, in the dark
The clock strikes one,
New day has begun.
Look up and hark!
With singing heart forestall the
carolling lark.

After mid-day, in the light
The clock strikes one,
Day-fall has begun.
Cast up, set right
The day's account against the on-
coming night.

After noon and night, one day
For ever one
Ends not, once begun.
Whither away,
O brothers and O sisters? Pause
and pray.

Before 1880.

'As thy days, so shall thy strength be.'

DAY that hath no tinge of night,
Night that hath no tinge of day,
These at last will come to sight
Not to fade away.

This is twilight that we know,
Scarcely night and scarcely day;
This hath been from long ago
Shed around man's way:

Step by step to utter night,
Step by step to perfect day,
To the Left Hand or the Right
Leading all away.

This is twilight: be it so;
Suited to our strength our day:
Let us follow on to know,
Patient by the way.

Before 1893.

A HEAVY heart, if ever heart was
heavy,
I offer Thee this heavy heart of
me.
Are such as this the hearts Thou art
fain to levy
To do and dare for Thee, to
bleed for Thee?
Ah blessed heaviness if such they
be!

Time was I bloomed with blossom
and stood leafy,
How long before the fruit if fruit
there be:
Lord, if by bearing fruit my heart
grows heavy,
Leafless and bloomless yet accept
of me
The stripped fruit-bearing heart I
offer Thee.

Lifted to Thee my heart weighs no
so heavy,
It leaps and lightens lifted up to
Thee;
It sings, it hopes to sing amid the
bevy

Of thousand thousand choirs that sing, and see
Thy Face, me loving, for Thou lovest me.

Before 1886.

IF love is not worth loving, then life is not worth living,
Nor aught is worth remembering but well forgot;
For store is not worth storing and gifts are not worth giving,
If love is not;

And idly cold is death-cold, and life-heat idly hot,
And vain is any offering and vainer our receiving,
And vanity of vanities is all our lot.

Better than life's heaving heart is death's heart unheaving,
Better than the opening leaves are the leaves that rot,
For there is nothing left worth achieving or retrieving,
If love is not.

Before 1886.

WHAT is it Jesus saith unto the soul?
'Take up the Cross, and come and follow Me.'
One word He saith to all men: none may be
Without a cross yet hope to touch the goal.
Then heave it bravely up, and brace thy whole
Body to bear; it will not weigh on thee
Past strength; or if it crush thee to thy knee
Take heart of grace, for grace shall be thy dole.
Give thanks to-day, and let to-morrow take
Heed to itself; to-day imports thee more.
To-morrow may not dawn like yesterday:
Until that unknown morrow go thy way,
Suffer and work and strive for Jesus' sake:—
Who tells thee what to-morrow keeps in store?

2 *March* 1850 *to before* 1886.

THEY lie at rest, our blessed dead;
The dews drop cool above their head,
They knew not when fleet summer fled.

Together all, yet each alone;
Each laid at rest beneath his own
Smooth turf or white allotted stone.

When shall our slumber sink so deep,
And eyes that wept and eyes that weep
Weep not in the sufficient sleep?

God be with you, our great and small,
Our loves, our best beloved of all,
Our own beyond the salt sea-wall.

Before 1886.

'Ye that fear Him, both small and great.'

GREAT or small below,
Great or small above;
Be we Thine, whom Thou dost know
And love:

First or last on earth,
First or last in Heaven;
Only weighted with Thy worth,
And shriven.

Wise or ignorant,
Strong or weak; Amen;
Sifted now, cast down, in want;—
But then?

Then,—when sun nor moon,
Time nor death, finds place,
Seeing in the eternal noon
Thy Face:

Then,—when tears and sighing,
Changes, sorrows, cease;
Living by Thy Life undying
In peace:

Then,—when all creation
Keeps its jubilee,
Crowned amid Thy holy nation;
Crowned, discrowned, in adoration
Of Thee.

Circa 1877.

Called to be Saints.

THE lowest place. Ah, Lord, how steep and high
That lowest place whereon a saint shall sit!
Which of us halting, trembling, pressing nigh,
Shall quite attain to it?

Yet, Lord, Thou pressest nigh to hail and grace
Some happy soul, it may be still unfit
For Right Hand or for Left Hand, but whose place
Waits there prepared for it.

[illegible]

THE sinner's own fault? So it was
If every own fault found us out,
Dogged us and hedged us round about,
What comfort should we take because
Not half our due we thus wrung out?

Clearly his own fault. Yet I think
My fault in part, who did not pray
But lagged and would not lead the way.
I, haply, proved his missing link.
God help us both to mend and pray.

Before 1880.

WHO cares for earthly bread thou white?
Nay, heavenly sheaf of harvest corn!
Who cares for earthly crown to-night?
Nay, heavenly crown to-morrow morn!
I will not wander left or right,
The straightest road is shortest too;
And since we hold all hope in view
And triumph where is no more pain,
To-night I bid good night to you
And bid you meet me there again.

Before 1880.

LAUGHING Life cries at the feast,—
Craving Death cries at the door,
'Fish or fowl or fatted beast?'
'Come with me, thy feast is o'er.'—
'Wreathe the violets.'—'Watch them fade.'—
'I am sunshine.'—'I am shade.'—
I am the sun burying west.'—
'I am pleasure.'—'I am rest;
Come with me, for I am best.'

[illegible]

The end is not yet.

OME by different ways. Yet all
Homeward bound thro' prayer
and praise,
ung with old, and great with
small,
Home by different ways.

Many nights and many days
ind must bluster, rain must fall,
Quake the quicksand, shift the
haze.

Te hath called and death will call
Saints who praying kneel at gaze,
rd the flood or leap the wall,
Home by different ways.

Before 1886.

HO would wish back the Saints
upon our rough
Wearisome road?
Wish back a breathless soul
Just at the goal?
My soul, praise God
r all dear souls which have enough.

vould not fetch one back to hope
with me
A hope deferred,
To taste a cup that slips
From thirsting lips:—
Hath he not heard
d seen what was to hear and see?

ow could I stand to answer the
rebuke
If one should say:
'O friend of little faith,
Good was my death,
And good my day
rest, and good the sleep I took'?

3 *December* 1861.

R

'That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it is Man.'

'EYE hath not seen':—yet man
hath known and weighed
A hundred thousand marvels that
have been:
What is it which (the Word of Truth
hath said)
Eye hath not seen?

'Ear hath not heard':—yet harpings
of delight,
Trumpets of triumph, song and
spoken word,
Man knows them all: what lovelier,
loftier might
Hath ear not heard?

'Nor heart conceived':—yet man
hath now desired
Beyond all reach, beyond his hope
believed,
Loved beyond death: what fire shall
yet be fired
No heart conceived?

'Deep calls to deep':—man's depth
would be despair
But for God's deeper depth: we
sow to reap.
Have patience, wait, betake ourselves
to prayer:
Deep answereth deep.

Before 1886.

OF each sad word which is more
sorrowful,
'Sorrow' or 'Disappointment'?
I have heard
Subtle inflections, baffling subtlest
rule,
Of each sad word.

K

Sorrow can mourn: and lo a
mourning bird
Sings sweetly to sweet echoes of its
dule,
While silent disappointment
broods unstirred.

Yet both nurse hope, where Penitence
keeps school
Who makes fools wise and saints
of them that erred:
Wise men shape stepping stone, or
curb, or tool,
Of each sad word.

Before 1886.

I see that all things come to an end.

I

NO more! while sun and planets fly,
And wind and storm and seasons
four,
And while we live and while we
die,—
No more.

Nevertheless old ocean's roar,
And wide earth's multitudinous cry,
And echo's pent reverberant store,

Shall hush to silence by and by:
Ah rosy world gone cold and
hoar!
Man opes no more a mortal eye,
No more.

Before 1886.

But Thy Commandment is exceeding broad.

II

ONCE again to wake, nor wish to
sleep;
Once again to feel, nor feel a pain!
Rouse thy soul to watch and pray
and weep
Once again.

Hope afresh, for hope shall not
be vain:
Start afresh along the exceeding
steep
Road to glory, long and rough
and plain.

Sow and reap: for while these
moments creep,
Time and earth and life are on
the wane:
Now, in tears; to-morrow, laugh
and reap
Once again.

Before 1886.

Sursum Corda.

'LIFT up your hearts.' 'We lift
them up.' Ah me!
I cannot, Lord, lift up my heart to
Thee:
Stoop, lift it up, that where Thou art
I too may be.

'Give Me thy heart.' I would not
say Thee nay,
But have no power to keep or give
away
My heart: stoop, Lord, and take it
to Thyself to-day.

Stoop, Lord, as once before, now
once anew;
Stoop, Lord, and hearken, hearken,
Lord, and do,
And take my will, and take my heart
and take me too.

Before 1886.

YE, who are not dead and fit
Like blasted tree beside the pit
But for the axe that levels it,

Living show life of love, whereof
The force wields earth and heaven
above:
Who knows not love begetteth love?

Love poises earth in space, Love rolls
Wide worlds rejoicing on their poles,
And girds them round with aureoles.

Love lights the sun, Love thro' the
dark
Lights the moon's evanescent arc,
Lights up the star, lights up the spark.

O ye who taste that love is sweet,
Set waymarks for all doubtful feet
That stumble on in search of it.

Sing notes of love: that some who
hear
Far off inert may lend an ear,
Rise up and wonder and draw near.

Lead life of love: that others who
Behold your life may kindle too
With love, and cast their lot with you.

Before 1886.

WHERE shall I find a white rose
blowing?
Out in the garden where all sweets
be,—
But out in my garden the snow was
snowing
And never a white rose opened for
me.
Nought but snow and a wind were
blowing
And snowing.

Where shall I find a blush rose
blushing?—
On the garden wall or the garden
bed.
But out in my garden the rain was
rushing
And never a blush rose raised its
head.
Nothing glowing, flushing or blush-
ing:
Rain rushing.

Where shall I find a red rose bud-
ding?—
Out in the garden where all things
grow.
But out in my garden a flood was
flooding
And never a red rose began to
blow.
Out in a flooding what should be
budding?
All flooding!

Now is winter and now is sorrow,
No roses but only thorns to-
day:
Thorns will put on roses to-morrow,
Winter and sorrow scudding away.
No more winter and no more sorrow
To-morrow.

Circa 1884.

Redeeming the Time.

A LIFE of hope deferred too often is
A life of wasted opportunities;
A life of perished hope too often is
A life of all-lost opportunities:
Yet hope is but the flower and not
the root,
And hope is still the flower and not
the fruit;—

Arise and sow and weed: a day shall come
When also thou shalt keep thy harvest home.
Before 1886.

Now they desire a Better Country.

LOVE said nay, while Hope kept saying
All his sweetest say,
Hope so keen to start a-maying!—
Love said nay.

Love was bent to watch and pray;
Long the watching, long the praying;
Hope grew drowsy, pale and grey.

Hope in dreams set off a-straying,
All his dream-world flushed by May;
While unslumbering, praying, weighing,
Love said nay.
Before 1886.

A CASTLE-BUILDER'S WORLD

The line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness.

UNRIPE harvest there hath none to reap it
From the misty gusty place,
Unripe vineyard there hath none to keep it
In unprofitable space.
Living men and women are not found there,
Only masks in flocks and shoals;
Flesh-and-bloodless hazy masks surround there
Ever wavering orbs and poles;
Flesh-and-bloodless vapid masks abound there,
Shades of bodies without souls.
Before 1886.

These all wait upon Thee.

INNOCENT eyes not ours
Are made to look on flowers,
Eyes of small birds and insects small:
Morn after summer morn
The sweet rose on her thorn
Opens her bosom to them all.
The least and last of things
That soar on quivering wings,
Or crawl among the grass blades out of sight,
Have just as clear a right
To their appointed portion of delight
As Queens or Kings.
22 *January* 1853.

'Doeth well . . . doeth better.'

MY love whose heart is tender said to me,
'A moon lacks light except her sun befriend her.
Let us keep tryst in heaven, dear Friend,' said she,
My love whose heart is tender.

From such a loftiness no words could bend her:
Yet still she spoke of 'us' and spoke as 'we,'
Her hope substantial, while my hope grew slender.

Now keeps she tryst beyond earth's utmost sea,
Wholly at rest, tho' storms should toss and rend her;
And still she keeps my heart and keeps its key,
My love whose heart is tender.
Before 1886.

UR heaven must be within ourselves,
Our home and heaven the work of faith
l thro' this race of life which shelves
Downward to death.

faith shall build the boundary wall,
And hope shall plant the secret bower,
at both may show magnifical
With gem and flower.

hile over all a dome must spread,
And love shall be that dome above;
d deep foundations must be laid,
And these are love.

Before 1886.

Vanity of Vanities.

' all the downfalls in the world,
The flutter of an Autumn leaf
Grows grievous by suggesting grief:
ho thought, when Spring was first unfurled,
this? The wide world lay empearled;
ho thought of frost that nips the world?
Sigh on, my ditty.

ere lurk a hundred subtle stings
To prick us in our daily walk:
An apple cankered on its stalk,
robin snared for all his wings,
voice that sang but never sings;
a, sight or sound or silence stings.
Kind Lord, show pity.

August 1858.

THE hills are tipped with sunshine, while I walk
In shadows dim and cold:
The unawakened rose sleeps on her stalk
In a bud's fold,
Until the sun flood all the world with gold.

The hills are crowned with glory, and the glow
Flows widening down apace:
Unto the sunny hill-tops I, set low,
Lift a tired face,—
Ah happy rose, content to wait for grace!

How tired a face, how tired a brain, how tired
A heart I lift, who long
For something never felt but still desired;
Sunshine and song,
Song where the choirs of sunny heaven stand choired.

Before 1893.

SCARCE tolerable life, which all life long
Is dominated by one dread of death;
Is such life, life? if so who pondereth
May call salt sweetness or call discord song.
Ah me, this solitude where swarms a throng!
Life slowly grows and dwindles breath by breath:
Death slowly grows on us; no word it saith,
Its cords all lengthened and its pillars strong.

Life dies apace, a life that but deceives :
Death reigns as tho' it lived, and yet is dead :
Where is the life that dies not but that lives ?
The sweet long life, immortal, ever young,
True life that wooes us with a silver tongue
Of hope, much said and much more left unsaid.

Circa 1884.

ALL heaven is blazing yet
With the meridian sun :
Make haste, unshadowing sun, make haste to set ;
O lifeless life, have done.
I choose what once I chose ;
What once I willed, I will :
Only the heart its own bereavement knows ;
O clamorous heart, lie still.

That which I chose, I choose ;
That which I willed, I will ;
That which I once refused, I still refuse :
O hope deferred, be still.
That which I chose and choose
And will is Jesus' Will :
He hath not lost his life who seems to lose :
O hope deferred, hope still.

Before 1886.

Balm in Gilead.

HEARTSEASE I found, where Love-lies-bleeding
Empurpled all the ground :
Whatever flowers I missed unheeding,
Heartsease I found.

Yet still my garden mound
Stood sore in need of watering, weeding,
And binding growths unbound.

Ah when shades fell, to light succeeding,
I scarcely dared look round :
'Love-lies-bleeding' was all my pleading ;
Heartsease I found.

Before 1886.

'In the day of his Espousals.'

THAT Song of Songs which is Solomon's
Sinks and rises, and loves and longs,
Thro' temperate zones and torrid zones,
That Song of Songs.

Fair its floating moon with her prongs :
Love is laid for its paving stones :
Right it sings without thought of wrongs.

Doves it hath with music of moans,
Queens in throngs and damsels in throngs,
High tones and mysterious undertones,
That Song of Songs.

Before 1886.

'She came from the uttermost part of the earth.'

'THE half was not told me,' said Sheba's Queen,
Weighing that wealth of wisdom and of gold :

hy fame falls short of this that I
have seen :
The half was not told.

'Happy thy servants who stand
to behold,
and to drink in thy gracious
speech and mien ;
Happy, thrice happy, the flock of
thy fold.

As the darkened moon while a
shadow between
Her face and her kindling sun is
rolled,
depart ; but my heart keeps
memory green :
The half was not told.'

Before 1886.

LLELUIA ! or Alas ! my heart is
crying :
yours is sighing ;
replying with content undying,
Alleluia !

Alas ' grieves overmuch for pain
that is ending,
urt that is mending,
fe descending soon to be ascend-
ing.—
Alleluia !

Before 1893.

HE Passion Flower hath sprung
up tall,
Hath east and west its arms
outspread ;
The heliotrope shoots up its head
clear the shadow of the wall :
own looks the Passion Flower,
The heliotrope looks upward still,
Hour by hour
On the heavenward hill.

The Passion Flower blooms red or
white,
A shadowed white, a cloudless
red ;
Caressingly it droops its head,
Its leaves, its tendrils, from the
light :
Because that lowlier flower
Looks up, but mounts not half so
high,
Hour by hour
Tending toward the sky.

Before 1893.

God's Acre.

HAIL, garden of confident hope !
Where sweet seeds are quickening
in darkness and cold ;
For how sweet and how young
will they be
When they pierce thro' the mould.
Balm, myrtle, and heliotrope
There watch and there wait out
of sight for their Sun :
While the Sun, which they see
not, doth see
Each and all one by one.

Before 1893.

The Flowers appear on the Earth.

YOUNG girls wear flowers,
Young brides a flowery wreath,
But next we plant them
In garden plots of death.
Whose lot is best—
The maiden's curtained rest,
Or bride's whose hoped-for sweet
May yet outstrip her feet ?
Ah what are such as these
To death's sufficing ease ?
He sleeps indeed who sleeps in
peace
Where night and morning meet.

Dear are the blossoms
For bride's or maiden's head,
But dearer planted
Around our blessed dead.
Those mind us of decay
And joys that fade away;
These preach to us perfection,
Long love and resurrection.
We make our graveyards fair,
For spirit-like birds of air,
For Angels may be finding there
Lost Eden's own delection.

26 March 1855.

'Thou knewest . . . thou oughtest therefore.'

BEHOLD in heaven a floating dazzling cloud,
So dazzling that I could but cry Alas!
Alas, because I felt how low I was;
Alas, within my spirit if not aloud,
Foreviewing my last breathless bed and shroud:
Thus pondering, I glanced downward on the grass;
And the grass bowed when airs of heaven would pass,
Lifting itself again when it had bowed.
That grass spake comfort; weak it was and low,
Yet strong enough and high enough to bend
In homage at a message from the sky:
As the grass did and prospered, so will I;
Tho' knowing little, doing what I know,
And strong in patient weakness till the end.

Before 1893.

Go in Peace.

CAN peach renew lost bloom,
Or violet lost perfume,
Or sullied snow turn white as [illegible] night?
Man cannot compass it, yet never fear:
The leper Naaman
Shows what God will and can.
God Who worked there is working here;
Wherefore let shame, not gloom, betinge thy brow.
God Who worked then is working now.

Before 1893.

Half dead.

O CHRIST the Life, look on me where I lie
Ready to die:
O Good Samaritan, nay, pass not by.

O Christ, my Life, pour in Thine oil and wine
To keep me Thine;
Me ever Thine, and Thee for ever mine.

Watch by Thy saints and sinners, watch by all
Thy great and small:
Once Thou didst call us all, O Lord, recall.

Think how Thy saints love sinners, how they pray
And hope alway,
And thereby grow more like Thee day by day.

Saint of saints, if those with
prayer and vow
Succour us now. . . .
was not they died for us, it was
Thou.

Before 1861.

One of the Soldiers with a Spear pierced
His Side.'

H Lord, we all have pierced Thee :
wilt Thou be
Wroth with us all to slay us all ?
lay, Lord, be this thing far from
Thee and me :
By whom should we arise, for we
are small,
y whom if not by Thee ?

ord, if of us who pierced Thee
Thou spare one,
Spare yet one more to love Thy
Face,
nd yet another of poor souls undone,
Another, and another—God of
grace,
et mercy overrun.

Before 1893.

'HERE love is, there comes sorrow
day or else to-morrow :
ndure the mood,
ave only means our good.

'here love is, there comes pleasure
'ith or withouten measure,
arly or late
neering the sorriest state.

'here love is, all perfection
stored for heart's delection ;
w where love is
wells every sort of bliss.

Who would not choose a sorrow
Love's self will cheer to-morrow ?
One day of sorrow,
Then such a long to-morrow !

Before 1886.

BURY Hope out of sight,
No book for it and no bell ;
It never could bear the light
Even while growing and well :
Think if now it could bear
The light on its face of care
And grey scattered hair.

No grave for Hope in the earth,
But deep in that silent soul
Which rang no bell for its birth
And rings no funeral toll.
Cover its once bright head ;
Nor odours nor tears be shed :
It lived once, it is dead.

Brief was the day of its power,
The day of its grace how brief :
As the fading of a flower,
As the falling of a leaf,
So brief its day and its hour ;
No bud more and no bower
Or hint of a flower.

Shall many wail it ? not so :
Shall one bewail it ? not one :
Thus it hath been from long ago,
Thus it shall be beneath the
sun.
O fleet sun, make haste to flee ;
O rivers, fill up the sea ;
O Death, set the dying free.

The sun nor loiters nor speeds,
The rivers run as they ran,
Thro' clouds or thro' windy reeds
All run as when all began.

Only Death turns at our cries:
Lo the Hope we buried with sighs
Alive in Death's eyes!

Before 1886.

A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope.

ALL tears done away with the bitter unquiet sea,
Death done away from among the living at last,
Man shall say of sorrow Love grant it to thee and me!
At last, 'It is past.'

Shall I say of pain 'It is past,' nor say it with thee,
Thou heart of my heart, thou soul of my soul, my Friend?
Shalt thou say of pain 'It is past,' nor say it with me
Beloved to the end?

Before 1893.

ONE woe is past. Come what come will,
Thus much is ended and made fast:
Two woes may overhang us still;
One woe is past.

As flowers when winter puffs its last
Wake in the vale, trail up the hill,
Nor wait for skies to overcast;

So meek souls rally from the chill
Of pain and fear and poisonous blast,
To lift their heads: come good, come ill,
One woe is past.

Before 1893.

Take no thought for the morrow.

WHO knows? God knows: and what He knows
Is well and best.
The darkness hideth not from Him, but glows
Clear as the morning or the evening rose
Of east or west.

Wherefore man's strength is to sit still
Not wasting care
To antedate to-morrow's good or ill;
Yet watching meekly, watching with good will,
Watching to prayer.

Some rising or some setting ray
From east or west,
If not to-day, why then another day
Will light each dove upon the homeward way
Safe to her nest.

Before 1893.

Consider the Lilies of the field.

SOLOMON most glorious in array
Put not on his glories without care:
Clothe us as Thy lilies of a day,
As the lilies Thou accountest fair,
Lilies of Thy making,
Of Thy love partaking,
Filling with free fragrance earth and air:
Thou Who gatherest lilies, gather us and wear.

Before 1893.

'Son, remember.'

LAID beside thy gate am Lazarus ;
See me or see me not, I still am there,
Hungry and thirsty, sore and sick and bare,
Dog-comforted and crumbs-solicitous :
While thou in all thy ways art sumptuous,
Daintily clothed, with dainties for thy fare :
Thus a world's wonder thou art quit of care,
And, be I seen or not seen, I am thus.
One day a worm for thee, a worm for me :
With my worm angel songs and trumpet-burst
And plenitude an end of all desire :
But what for thee, alas ! but what for thee ?
Fire and an unextinguishable thirst,
Thirst in an unextinguishable fire.

Before 1893.

Heaviness may endure for a night, but Joy cometh in the morning.

NO thing is great on this side of the grave,
Nor any thing of any stable worth :
Whatso is born from earth returns to earth :
No thing we grasp proves half the thing we crave :
The tidal wave shrinks to the ebbing wave :
Laughter is folly, madness lurks in mirth :
Mankind sets off a dying from the birth :
Life is a losing game, with what to save ?
Thus I sat mourning like a mournful owl,
And like a doleful dragon made ado,
Companion of all monsters of the dark :
When lo the light cast off its nightly cowl,
And up to heaven flashed a carolling lark,
And all creation sang its hymn anew.

While all creation sang its hymn anew
What could I do but sing a stave in tune ?
Spectral on high hung pale the vanishing moon
Where a last gleam of stars hung paling too.
Lark's lay—a cockcrow—with a scattered few
Soft early chirpings with a tender croon
Of doves—a hundred thousand calls, and soon
A hundred thousand answers sweet and true.
These set me singing too at unawares :
One note for all delights and charities,
One note for hope reviving with the light,
One note for every lovely thing that is ;
Till while I sang my heart shook off its cares
And revelled in the land of no more night.

Before 1886.

The Will of the Lord be done.

O LORD, fulfil Thy Will,
Be the days few or many, good or ill :
Prolong them, to suffice
For offering up ourselves Thy sacrifice ;
Shorten them if Thou wilt,
To make in righteousness an end of guilt.
Yea, they will not be long
To souls who learn to sing a patient song ;
Yea, short they will not be
To souls on tiptoe to flee home to Thee.
O Lord, fulfil Thy Will :
Make Thy Will ours, and keep us patient still,
Be the days few or many, good or ill.

Before 1893.

Lay up for yourselves treasures in Heaven.

TREASURE plies a feather,
Pleasure spreadeth wings,
Taking flight together,—
Ah my cherished things !

Fly away, poor pleasure,
That art so brief a thing :
Fly away, poor treasure,
That hast so swift a wing.

Pleasure, to be pleasure,
Must come without a wing :
Treasure, to be treasure,
Must be a stable thing.

Treasure without feather,
Pleasure without wings,
Elsewhere dwell together
And are heavenly things.

Before 1886.

Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth.

'ONE sorrow more ? I thought the tale complete.'—
He bore amiss who grudges what he bore :
Stretch out thy hands and urge thy feet to meet
One sorrow more.

Yea, make thy count for two or three or four :
The kind Physician will not slack to treat
His patient while there's rankling in the sore.

Bear up in anguish, ease will yet be sweet ;
Bear up all day, for night has rest in store :
Christ bears thy burden with thee, rise and greet
One sorrow more.

Before 1886.

'Then shall ye shout.'

IT seems an easy thing
Mayhap one day to sing ;
Yet the next day
We cannot sing or say.

Keep silence with good heart,
While silence fits our part :
Another day
We shall both sing and say.

Keep silence, counting time
To strike in at the chime :
Prepare to sound,—
Our part is coming round.

Can we not sing or say?
In silence let us pray,
And meditate
Our love-song while we wait.
Before 1886.

EVERYTHING that is born must die;
Everything that can sigh may sing;
Rocks in equal balance, low or high,
Everything.

Honeycomb is weighed against a sting;
Hope and fear take turns to touch the sky;
Height and depth respond alternating.

O my soul, spread wings of love to fly,
Wings of dove that soars on home-bound wing:
Love trusts Love, till Love shall justify
Everything.
Before 1886.

LORD, grant us calm, if calm can set forth Thee;
Or tempest, if a tempest set Thee forth;
Wind from the east or west or south or north,
Or congelation of a silent sea,
With stillness of each tremulous aspen tree.

Still let fruit fall, or hang upon the tree;
Still let the east and west, the south and north,
Curb in their winds, or plough a thundering sea;
Still let the earth abide to set Thee forth,
Or vanish like a smoke to set forth Thee.
Before 1893.

Changing Chimes.

IT was not warning that our fathers lacked,
It is not warning that we lack to-day.
The Voice that cried still cries: 'Rise up and act:
Watch alway,—watch and pray,
—watch alway,—
All men.'

Alas, if aught was lacked goodwill was lacked;
Alas, goodwill is what we lack to-day.
O gracious Voice, grant grace that all may act,
Watch and act,—watch and pray,
—watch alway.—
Amen.
Before 1893.

Thy Servant will go and fight with this Philistine.

SORROW of saints is sorrow of a day,
Gladness of saints is gladness evermore:
Send on thy hope, send on thy will before,
To chant God's praise along the narrow way.
Stir up His praises if the flesh would sway,

Exalt His praises if the world
press sore,
Peal out His praises if black
Satan roar
A hundred thousand lies to say
them nay.
Devil and Death and Hades, three-
fold cord
Not quickly broken, front thee to
thy face;
Front thou them with a face of
tenfold flint:
Shout for the battle, David!
never stint
Body or breath or blood, but,
proof in grace,
Die for thy Lord, as once for thee
thy Lord.

Before 1893.

THRO' burden and heat of the day
How weary the hands and the
feet
That labour with scarcely a stay,
Thro' burden and heat!

Tired toiler whose sleep shall be
sweet,
Kneel down, it will rest thee to pray:
Then forward, for daylight is fleet.

Cool shadows show lengthening and
grey,
Cool twilight will soon be com-
plete:
What matters this wearisome way
Thro' burden and heat?

Before 1886.

'Then I commended Mirth.'

'A MERRY heart is a continual
feast.'
Then take we life and all things
in good part:
To fast grows festive while we keep
at least
A merry heart.

Well pleased with nature and well
pleased with art;
A merry heart makes cheer for man
and beast,
And fancies music in a creaking
cart.

Some day, a restful heart whose toils
have ceased,
A heavenly heart gone home from
earthly mart:
To-day, blow wind from west or
wind from east,
A merry heart.

Before 1886.

SORROW hath a double voice,
Sharp to-day but sweet to-morrow
Wait in patience, hope, rejoice,
Tried friends of sorrow.

Pleasure hath a double taste,
Sweet to-day but sharp to-morrow
Friends of pleasure, rise in haste,
Make friends with sorrow.

Pleasure set aside to-day
Comes again to rule to-morrow:
Welcomed sorrow will not stay,
Farewell to sorrow!

Before 1886.

SHADOWS to-day, while shadow
show God's Will.
Light were not good except H
sent us light.
Shadows to-day, because this da
is night

Whose marvels and whose mysteries fulfil
Their course and deep in darkness serve Him still.
Thou dim aurora, on the extremest height
Of airy summits wax not over-bright;
Refrain thy rose, refrain thy daffodil.
Until God's Word go forth to kindle thee
And garland thee and bid thee stoop to us,
Blush in the heavenly choirs and glance not down:
To-day we race in darkness for a crown,
In darkness for beatitude to be,
In darkness for the city luminous.

Before 1893.

Truly the Light is sweet.

LIGHT colourless doth colour all things else:
Where light dwells pleasure dwells
And peace excels.
Then rise and shine,
Thou shadowed soul of mine,
And let a cheerful rainbow make thee fine.

Light, fountain of all beauty and delight,
Leads day forth from the night,
Turns blackness white.
Light waits for thee
Where all have eyes to see:
Oh well is thee, and happy shalt thou be.

Before 1893.

Are ye not much better than they?

THE twig sprouteth,
The moth outeth,
The plant springeth,
The bird singeth:
Tho' little we sing to-day
Yet are we better than they;
Tho' growing with scarce a showing,
Yet, please God, we are growing.

The twig teacheth,
The moth preacheth,
The plant vaunteth,
The bird chanteth,
God's mercy overflowing,
Merciful past man's knowing.
Please God to keep us growing
Till the awful day of mowing.

Before 1893.

Yea, the sparrow hath found her an house.

WISEST of sparrows that sparrow which sitteth alone
Perched on the housetop, its own upper chamber, for nest;
Wisest of swallows that swallow which timely has flown
Over the turbulent sea to the land of its rest:
Wisest of sparrows and swallows, if I were as wise!

Wisest of spirits that spirit which dwelleth apart
Hid in the Presence of God for a chapel and nest,
Sending a wish and a will and a passionate heart
Over the eddy of life to that Presence in rest:
Seated alone and in peace till God bids it arise.

Before 1893.

I am small and of no reputation.

THE least, if so I am;
If so, less than the least,
May I reach heaven to glorify the Lamb
And sit down at the Feast.

I fear and I am small,
Whence am I of good cheer;
For I, who hear Thy call, have heard Thee call
To Thee the small who fear.

Before 1893.

O CHRIST my God Who seest the unseen,
O Christ my God Who knowest the unknown,
Thy mighty Blood was poured forth to atone
For every sin that can be or hath been.

O Thou Who seest what I cannot see,
Thou Who didst love us all so long ago,
O Thou Who knowest what I must not know,
Remember all my hope, remember me.

Before 1886.

YEA, if Thou wilt, Thou canst put up Thy sword;
But what if Thou shouldst sheathe it to the hilt
Within the heart that sues to Thee, O Lord?
Yea, if Thou wilt.

For if Thou wilt Thou canst purge out the guilt
Of all, of any, even the most abhorred:
Thou canst pluck down, rebuild, build up the unbuilt.

Who wanders canst Thou gather by love's cord?
Who sinks, uplift from the undersucking silt
To set him on Thy rock within Thy ward?
Yea, if Thou wilt.

Before 1886.

SWEETNESS of rest when Thou sheddest rest,
Sweetness of patience till then;
Only the Will of our God is best
For all the millions of men.

For all the millions on earth to-day,
On earth and under the earth;
Waiting for earth to vanish away,
Waiting to come to the birth.

Before 1893.

O FOOLISH Soul! to make thy count
For languid falls and much forgiven,
When like a flame thou mightest mount
To storm and carry heaven.

A life so faint,—is this to live?
A goal so mean,—is this a goal?
Christ love thee, remedy, forgive,
Save thee, O foolish Soul.

Before 1893.

BEFORE the beginning Thou hast foreknown the end,
Before the birthday the death-bed was seen of Thee :
Cleanse what I cannot cleanse, mend what I cannot mend,
O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful to me.

While the end is drawing near I know not mine end ;
Birth I recall not, my death I cannot foresee :
O God, arise to defend, arise to befriend,
O Lord All-Merciful, be merciful to me.

Before 1893.

THE goal in sight ! Look up and sing,
Set faces full against the light,
Welcome with rapturous welcoming
The goal in sight.

Let be the left, let be the right :
Straight forward make your footsteps ring
A loud alarum thro' the night.

Death hunts you, yea, but reft of sting ;
Your bed is green, your shroud is white :
Hail Life and Death and all that bring
The goal in sight.

Before 1886.

LOOKING back along life's trodden way,
Gleams and greenness linger on the track ;
Distance melts and mellows all to-day,
Looking back.

Rose and purple and a silvery grey,
Is that cloud the cloud we called so black ?
Evening harmonizes all to-day,
Looking back.

Foolish feet so prone to halt or stray,
Foolish heart so restive on the rack !
Yesterday we sighed, but not to-day,
Looking back.

Before 1886.

THE WATCHERS

SHE fell asleep among the flowers
In the sober autumn hours.

Three there are about her bed,
At her side and feet and head.

At her head standeth the Cross
For which all else she counted loss :

Still and steadfast at her feet
Doth her Guardian Angel sit :

Prayers of truest love abide
Wrapping her on every side.

The holy Cross standeth alone,
Beneath the white moon, whitest stone.

Evil spirits come not near
Its shadow, shielding from all fear :

Once she bore it in her breast,
Now it certifies her rest.

Humble violets grow around
Its base, sweetening the grassy ground,

Leaf-hidden: so she hid from praise
Of men her pious holy ways.

Higher about it, twining close,
Clingeth a crimson thorny rose:

So from her heart's good seed of love
Thorns sprang below, flowers spring above.

Though yet his vigil doth not cease,
Her Angel sits in perfect peace,

With white folded wings: for she
He watches now is pure as he.

He watches with his loving eyes
For the day when she shall rise:

When full of glory and of grace
She shall behold him face to face.

Though she is safe for ever, yet
Human love doth not forget:

But prays that in her deep
Grave she may sleep a blessed sleep,

Till when time and the world are past
She may find mercy at the last.

So these three do hedge her in
From sorrow, as death does from sin.

So freed from earthly taint and pain
May they all meet in heaven. Amen.

25 *May* 1850.

THE THREE ENEMIES

THE FLESH

'SWEET, thou art pale.'
'More pale to see,
Christ hung upon the cruel tree
And bore His Father's wrath for me.'

'Sweet, thou art sad.'
'Beneath a rod
More heavy, Christ for my sake trod
The winepress of the wrath of God.'

'Sweet, thou art weary.'
'Not so Christ;
Whose mighty love of me sufficed
For Strength, Salvation, Eucharist.'

'Sweet, thou art footsore.'
'If I bleed,
His feet have bled; yea in my need
His Heart once bled for mine indeed.'

THE WORLD

'Sweet, thou art young.'
'So He was young
Who for my sake in silence hung
Upon the Cross with Passion wrung.'

'Look, thou art fair.'
'He was more fair
Than men, Who deigned for me to wear
A visage marred beyond compare.'

'And thou hast riches.'
'Daily bread:
All else is His: Who, living, dead,
For me lacked where to lay His Head.'

'And life is sweet.'
'It was not so
To Him, Whose Cup did overflow
With mine unutterable woe.'

THE DEVIL

'Thou drinkest deep.'
'When Christ would sup
He drained the dregs from out my cup:
So how should I be lifted up?'

'Thou shalt win Glory.'
'In the skies,
Lord Jesus, cover up mine eyes
Lest they should look on vanities.'

'Thou shalt have Knowledge.'
'Helpless dust!
In thee, O Lord, I put my trust:
Answer Thou for me, Wise and Just.'

'And Might.'—
'Get thee behind me. Lord,
Who hast redeemed and not abhorred
My soul, oh keep it by Thy Word.'

15 *June* 1851.

BEHOLD, I STAND AT THE DOOR AND KNOCK

WHO standeth at the gate?—A woman old,
A widow from the husband of her love.
'O lady, stay, this wind is piercing cold,
Oh look at the keen frosty moon above;
I have no home, am hungry, feeble, poor.'—
'I'm really very sorry, but I can
Do nothing for you; there's the clergyman,'
The lady said, and shivering closed the door.

Who standeth at the gate?—Way-worn and pale
A grey-haired man asks charity again.
'Kind lady, I have journeyed far, and fail
Through weariness; for I have begged in vain
Some shelter, and can find no lodging-place.'—
She answered: 'There's the work-house very near;
Go, for they'll certainly receive you there'—
Then shut the door against his pleading face.

Who standeth at the gate?—A stunted child,
Her sunk eyes sharpened with precocious care.
'O lady, save me from a home defiled,
From shameful sights and sounds that taint the air:
Take pity on me, teach me something good.'—
'For shame, why don't you work instead of cry?
I keep no young impostors here, not I.'
She slammed the door, indignant where she stood.

Who standeth at the gate, and will be heard?
Arise, O woman, from thy comforts now:
Go forth again to speak the careless word,
The cruel word unjust, with hardened brow.
But who is this, that standeth not to pray

As once, but terrible to judge thy
sin?
This whom thou wouldst not succour nor take in
Nor teach but leave to perish by the
way.

'Thou didst it not unto the least of
these,
And in them hast not done it unto
Me.
Thou wast as a princess rich and at
ease –
Now sit in dust and howl for
poverty.
Three times I stood beseeching at
thy gate,
Three times I came to bless thy
soul and save:
But now I come to judge for what
I gave,
And now at length thy sorrow is too
late.'

1 *December* 1851.

ADVENT

'COME,' Thou dost say to Angels,
To blessed Spirits, 'Come':
'Come,' to the lambs of Thine own
flock,
Thy little ones, 'Come home.'

'Come,' from the many-mansioned
house
The gracious word is sent;
'Come,' from the ivory palaces
Unto the Penitent.

O Lord, restore us deaf and blind,
Unclose our lips though dumb:
Then say to us, 'I come with speed,'
And we will answer, 'Come.'

12 *December* 1851.

ALL SAINTS

THEY have brought gold and spices
to my King,
Incense and precious stuffs and
ivory:
O holy Mother mine, what can I
bring
That so my Lord may deign to
look on me?
They sing a sweeter song than I can
sing,
All crowned and glorified exceedingly:
I, bound on earth, weep for my trespassing,—
They sing the song of love in
heaven, set free.
Then answered me my Mother, and
her voice
Spake to my heart, yea answered
in my heart:
'Sing, saith He to the heavens, to
earth, Rejoice:
Thou also lift thy heart to Him
above:
He seeks not thine, but thee such
as thou art,
For lo His banner over thee is Love.'

20 *January* 1852.

EYE HATH NOT SEEN

OUR feet shall tread upon the stars
Less bright than we.
The everlasting shore shall bound
A fairer sea
Than that which cold
Now glitters in the sun like gold.

Oh good, oh blest! but who shall say
How fair, how fair,

Is the light-region where no cloud
  Darkens the air,
  Where weary eyes
Rest on the green of Paradise?

There cometh not the wind nor rain
  Nor sun nor snow:
The Trees of Knowledge and of Life
  Bud there and blow,
  Their leaves and fruit
Fed from an undecaying root.

There Angels flying to and fro
  Are not more white
Than Penitents some while ago,
  Now Saints in light:
  Once soiled and sad—
Cleansed now and crowned, fulfilled and glad.

Now yearning through the perfect rest[1]
  Perhaps they gaze
Earthwards upon their best-beloved
  In all earth's ways:
  Longing, but not
With pain, as used to be their lot.

The hush of that beatitude
  Is ages long,
Sufficing Virgins, Prophets, Saints,
  Till the new song
  Shall be sent up
From lips which drained the bitter cup.

If but the thought of Paradise
  Gives joy on earth,
What shall it be to enter there
  Through second birth?
  To find once more
Our dearest treasure gone before?

To find the Shepherd of the sheep,
  The Lamb once slain,
Who leads His own by living streams—
  Never again
  To thirst, or need
Aught in green pastures where they feed.

But from the altar comes a cry
  Awful and strong
From martyred Saints: 'How long,' they say,
  'O Lord, how long,
  Holy and True,
Shall vengeance for our blood be due?'

Then the Lord gives them robes of white,
  And bids them stay
In patience till the time be full
  For the last day—
  The day of dread
When the last sentence shall be said;

When heaven and earth shall flee away,
  And the great deep
Shall render up her dead, and earth
  Her sons that sleep,
  And day of grace
Be hid for ever from Thy face.

Oh hide us, till Thy wrath be past,
  Our grief, our shame,
With Peter and with Magdalene,
  And him whose name
  No record tells
Who by Thy promise with Thee dwells.

1 *May* 1852.

A BRUISED REED SHALL HE NOT BREAK

I WILL accept thy will to do and be,
Thy hatred and intolerance of sin,
Thy will at least to love, that burns within
And thirsteth after Me:
So will I render fruitful, blessing still,
The germs and small beginnings in thy heart,
Because thy will cleaves to the better part.—
Alas, I cannot will.

Dost not thou will, poor soul? Yet I receive
The inner unseen longings of the soul,
I guide them turning towards Me; I control
And charm hearts till they grieve:
If thou desire, it yet shall come to pass,
Though thou but wish indeed to choose My love;
For I have power in earth and heaven above.—
I cannot wish, alas!

What, neither choose nor wish to choose? and yet
I still must strive to win thee and constrain:
For thee I hung upon the cross in pain,
How then can I forget?
If thou as yet dost neither love nor hate
Nor choose nor wish,—resign thyself, be still,
Till I infuse love, hatred, longing, will.—
I do not deprecate.

13 *June* 1852.

ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY

WHEN if ever life is sweet,
Save in heart in all a child,
A fair virgin undefiled,
Knelt she at her Saviour's feet:
While she laid her royal crown,
Thinking it too mean a thing
For a solemn offering,
Careless on the cushions down.

Fair she was as any rose,
But more pale than lilies white:
Her eyes full of deep repose
Seemed to see beyond our sight.
Hush, she is a holy thing:
Hush, her soul is in her eyes,
Seeking far in Paradise
For her Light, her Love, her King.

16 *June* 1852.

MOONSHINE

FAIR the sun riseth,
Bright as bright can be,
Fair the sun shineth
On a fair fair sea.

'Across the water
Wilt thou come with me,
Miles and long miles, love,
Over the salt sea?'

'If thou wilt hold me
Truly by the hand,
I will go with thee
Over sea and sand.

'If thou wilt hold me
That I shall not fall,
I will go with thee,
Love, in spite of all.'

Fair the moon riseth
On her heavenly way,
  Making the waters
Fairer than by day.

  A little vessel
Rocks upon the sea,
  Where stands a maiden
Fair as fair can be.

  Her smile rejoices
Though her mouth is mute:
  She treads the vessel
With her little foot.

  Truly he holds her
Faithful to his pledge,
  Guiding the vessel
From the water's edge.

Fair the moon saileth
  With her pale fair light,
Fair the girl gazeth
  Out into the night.

  Saith she, 'Like silver
Shines thy hair, not gold':
  Saith she, 'I shiver
In thy steady hold.

'Love,' she saith weeping,
'Loose thy hold awhile;
  My heart is freezing
In thy freezing smile.'

  The moon is hidden
By a silver cloud,
  Fair as a halo
Or a maiden's shroud.

  No more beseeching,
Ever on they go:
  The vessel rocketh
Softly to and fro:

  And still he holds her
That she shall not fall,
  Till pale mists whiten
Dimly over all.

  Onward and onward,
Far across the sea:
  Onward and onward,
Pale as pale can be:

  Onward and onward,
Ever hand in hand,
  From sun and moonlight
To another land.

16 *June* 1852.

I LOOK FOR THE LORD

OUR wealth has wasted all away,
  Our pleasures have found wings;
The night is long until the day;
  Lord, give us better things—
A ray of light in thirsty night
  And secret water-springs.

Our love is dead, or sleeps, or else
  Is hidden from our eyes:
Our silent love, while no man tells
  Or if it lives or dies.
Oh give us love, O Lord, above
  In changeless Paradise.

Our house is left us desolate,
  Even as Thy word hath said.
Before our face the way is great;
  Around us are the dead.
Oh guide us, save us from the grave,
  As Thou Thy saints hast led.

Lead us where pleasures evermore
  And wealth indeed are placed,

And home on an eternal shore,
And love that cannot waste:
Where joy Thou art unto the heart,
And sweetness to the taste.

28 *September* 1852.

THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS

WEEP yet awhile,—
Weep till that day shall dawn when thou shalt smile:
Watch till the day
When all save only love shall pass away.

Weep, sick and lonely,
Bow thy heart to tears,
For none shall guess the secret
Of thy griefs and fears.
Weep, till the day dawn,
Refreshing dew:
Weep till the spring:
For genial showers
Bring up the flowers,
And thou shalt sing
In summertime of blossoming.

Heart-sick and silent,
Weep and watch in pain.
Weep for hope perished,
Not to live again:
Weep for love's hope and fear
And passion vain.
Watch till the day
When all save only love shall pass away.

Then love rejoicing
Shall forget to weep:
Shall hope or fear no more,
Or watch, or sleep,
But only love and cease not,
Deep beyond deep.
Now we sow love in tears,
But then shall reap.
Have patience as the Lord's own flock of sheep:
Have patience with His love
Who died below, who lives for thee above.

23 *December* 1852.

WHITSUN EVE

THE white dove cooeth in her downy nest,
Keeping her young ones warm beneath her breast:
The white moon saileth through the cool clear sky,
Screened by a tender mist in passing by:
The white rose buds, with thorns upon its stem,
All the more precious and more dear for them:
The stream shines silver in the tufted grass,
The white clouds scarcely dim it as they pass;
Deep in the valleys lily cups are white,
They send up incense all the holy night.
Our souls are white, made clean in Blood once shed:
White blessed Angels watch around our bed:—
O spotless Lamb of God, still keep us so,
Thou who wert born for us in time of snow.

18 *May* 1853.

THERE REMAINETH THEREFORE A REST FOR THE PEOPLE OF GOD

I

'Ye have forgotten the exhortation.'

COME, blessed sleep, most full, most perfect, come :
Come, sleep, if so I may forget the whole ;
Forget my body and forget my soul,
Forget how long life is and troublesome.
Come, happy sleep, to soothe my heart or numb,
Arrest my weary spirit or control :
Till light be dark to me from pole to pole,
And winds and echoes and low songs be dumb.
Come, sleep, and lap me into perfect calm,
Lap me from all the world and weariness :
Come, secret sleep, with thine unuttered psalm,
Safe sheltering in a hidden cool recess :
Come, heavy dreamless sleep, and close and press
Upon mine eyes thy fingers dropping balm.

II

'Which speaketh unto you as unto children.

ART thou so weary then, poor thirsty soul ?
Have patience, in due season thou shalt sleep.
Mount yet a little while, the path is steep :
Strain yet a little while to reach the goal :
Do battle with thyself, achieve, control :
Till night come down with blessed slumber deep
As love, and seal thine eyes no more to weep
Through long tired vigils while the planets roll.
Have patience, for thou too shalt sleep at length,
Lapt in the pleasant shade of Paradise.
My Hands that bled for thee shall close thine eyes,
My Heart that bled for thee shall be thy rest :
I will sustain with everlasting strength,
And thou, with John, shalt lie upon My breast.

12 *July* 1853.

A HARVEST

O GATE of death, of the blessed night,
That shall open not again
On this world of shame and sorrow,
Where slow ages wax and wane,
Where are signs and seasons, days and nights,
And mighty winds and rain.

Is the day wearing toward the west ?—
Far off cool shadows pass,
A visible refreshment
Across the sultry grass :
Far off low mists are mustering,
A broken shifting mass.

Still in the deepest knowledge
Some depth is left unknown :
Still in the merriest music lurks
A plaintive undertone :
Still with the closest friend some throb
Of life is felt alone.

Time's summer breath is sweet, his sands
Ebb sparkling as they flow,
Yet some are sick that this should end
Which is from long ago :—
Are not the fields already white
To harvest in the glow ?—

There shall come another harvest
Than was in days of yore :
The reapers shall be Angels,
Our God shall purge the floor :—
No more seed-time, no more harvest,
Then for evermore.

1 *August* 1853.

THE ELEVENTH HOUR

Faint and worn and aged
One stands knocking at a gate ;
Though no light shines in the casement,
Knocking though so late.
It has struck eleven
In the courts of heaven,
Yet he still doth knock and wait.

While no answer cometh
From the heavenly hill,
Blessed Angels wonder
At his earnest will.
Hope and fear but quicken
While the shadows thicken :
He is knocking, knocking still.

Grim the gate unopened
Stands with bar and lock :
Yet within the unseen Porter
Hearkens to the knock.—
Doing and undoing,
Faint and yet pursuing,
This man's feet are on the Rock.

With a cry unceasing
Knocketh, prayeth he :
'Lord have mercy on me
When I cry to Thee.'
With a knock unceasing
And a cry increasing :
'O my Lord, remember me.'

Still the Porter standeth,
Love-constrained He standeth near,
While the cry increaseth
Of that love and fear :
'Jesus, look upon me—
Christ, hast Thou foregone me?—
If I must, I perish here.'

Faint the knocking ceases,
Faint the cry and call :
Is he lost indeed for ever,
Shut without the wall ?
Mighty Arms surround him,
Arms that sought and found him,
Held, withheld, and bore through all.

O celestial mansion,
Open wide the door :
Crown and robes of whiteness,
Stone inscribed before,
Flocking Angels bear them ;
Stretch thy hand and wear them,
Sit thou down for evermore.

5 *September* 1853.

SLEEP AT SEA

Sound the deep waters :—
Who shall sound that deep ?—

Too short the plummet,
And the watchmen sleep.
Some dream of effort
Up a toilsome steep;
Some dream of pasture grounds
For harmless sheep.

White shapes flit to and fro
From mast to mast;
They feel the distant tempest
That nears them fast:
Great rocks are straight ahead,
Great shoals not past;
They shout to one another
Upon the blast.

Oh soft the streams drop music
Between the hills,
And musical the birds' nests
Beside those rills:
The nests are types of home
Love-hidden from ills,
The nests are types of spirits
Love-music fills.

So dream the sleepers,
Each man in his place;
The lightning shows the smile
Upon each face:
The ship is driving,—driving,—
It drives apace:
And sleepers smile, and spirits
Bewail their case.

The lightning glares and reddens
Across the skies;
It seems but sunset
To those sleeping eyes.
When did the sun go down
On such a wise?
From such a sunset
When shall day arise?

'Wake,' call the spirits:
But to heedless ears:
They have forgotten sorrows
And hopes and fears;
They have forgotten perils
And smiles and tears;
Their dream has held them long,
Long years and years.

'Wake,' call the spirits again:
But it would take
A louder summons
To bid them awake.
Some dream of pleasure
For another's sake:
Some dream, forgetful
Of a lifelong ache.

One by one slowly,
Ah how sad and slow!
Wailing and praying
The spirits rise and go:
Clear stainless spirits,
White, as white as snow;
Pale spirits, wailing
For an overthrow.

One by one flitting,
Like a mournful bird
Whose song is tired at last
For no mate heard.
The loving voice is silent,
The useless word;
One by one flitting
Sick with hope deferred.

Driving and driving,
The ship drives amain:
While swift from mast to mast
Shapes flit again,
Flit silent as the silence
Where men lie slain;
Their shadow cast upon the sails
Is like a stain.

No voice to call the sleepers,
No hand to raise:
They sleep to death in dreaming
Of length of days.
Vanity of vanities,
The Preacher says:
Vanity is the end
Of all their ways.

17 *October* 1853.

CONSIDER THE LILIES OF THE FIELD

FLOWERS preach to us if we will hear:—
The rose saith in the dewy morn:
'I am most fair;
Yet all my loveliness is born
Upon a thorn.'
The poppy saith amid the corn:
'Let but my scarlet head appear
And I am held in scorn;
Yet juice of subtle virtue lies
Within my cup of curious dyes.'
The lilies say: 'Behold how we
Preach without words of purity.'
The violets whisper from the shade
Which their own leaves have made:
'Men scent our fragrance on the air,
Yet take no heed
Of humble lessons we would read.'

But not alone the fairest flowers:
The merest grass
Along the roadside where we pass,
Lichen and moss and sturdy weed,
Tell of His love who sends the dew,
The rain and sunshine too,
To nourish one small seed.

21 *October* 1853.

WHO HAVE A FORM OF GODLINESS

WHEN I am sick and tired it is God's will:
Also God's will alone is sure and best:—
So in my weariness I find my rest,
And so in poverty I take my fill.
Therefore I see my good in midst of ill,
Therefore in loneliness I build my nest,
And through hot noon pant toward the shady west,
And hope in sickening disappointment still.
So, when the times of restitution come,
The sweet times of refreshing come at last,
My God shall fill my longings to the brim:
Therefore I wait and look and long for Him:
Not wearied though the work is wearisome,
Nor fainting though the time be almost past.

18 *December* 1853.

SOME FEASTS AND FASTS

(*From* 1853 *to* 1893.)

ADVENT SUNDAY

BEHOLD, the Bridegroom cometh: go ye out
With lighted lamps and garlands round about
To meet Him in a rapture with a shout.

It may be at the midnight, black as pitch,
Earth shall cast up her poor, cast up her rich.

It may be at the crowing of the cock
Earth shall upheave her depth, uproot her rock.

For lo, the Bridegroom fetcheth home the Bride:
His Hands are Hands she knows, she knows His Side.

Like pure Rebekah at the appointed place,
Veiled, she unveils her face to meet His Face.

Like great Queen Esther in her triumphing,
She triumphs in the Presence of her King.

His Eyes are as a Dove's, and she 's Dove-eyed;
He knows His lovely mirror, sister, Bride.

He speaks with Dove-voice of exceeding love,
And she with love-voice of an answering Dove.

Behold, the Bridegroom cometh: go we out
With lamps ablaze and garlands round about
To meet Him in a rapture with a shout.

Before 1886.

ADVENT.

EARTH grown old, yet still so green,
Deep beneath her crust of cold
Nurses fire unfelt, unseen:
Earth grown old.

We who live are quickly told:
Millions more lie hid between
Inner swathings of her fold.

When will fire break up her screen?
When will life burst thro' her mould?
Earth, earth, earth, thy cold is keen,
Earth grown old.

Before 1886.

SOONER or later: yet at last
The Jordan must be past;

It may be he will overflow
His banks the day we go;

It may be that his cloven deep
Will stand up on a heap.

Sooner or later: yet one day
We all must pass that way;

Each man, each woman, humbled, pale,
Pass veiled within the veil;

Child, parent, bride, companion,
Alone, alone, alone.

For none a ransom can be paid,
A suretyship be made:

I, bent by mine own burden, must
Enter my house of dust;

I, rated to the full amount,
Must render mine account.

When earth and sea shall empty all
Their graves of great and small;

When earth wrapt in a fiery flood
Shall no more hide her blood;

When mysteries shall be revealed;
All secrets be unsealed;

When things of night, when things
of shame,
Shall find at last a name,

Pealed for a hissing and a curse
Throughout the universe:

Then, Awful Judge, most Awful God,
Then cause to bud Thy rod,

To bloom with blossoms, and to give
Almonds; yea, bid us live.

I plead Thyself with Thee, I plead
Thee in our utter need:

Jesus, most Merciful of Men,
Show mercy on us then;

Lord God of Mercy and of men,
Show mercy on us then.

CHRISTMAS EVE

CHRISTMAS hath a darkness
Brighter than the blazing noon,
Christmas hath a chilliness
Warmer than the heat of June,
Christmas hath a beauty
Lovelier than the world can show.
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Earth, strike up your music,
Birds that sing and bells that ring;
Heaven hath answering music
For all Angels soon to sing:
Earth, put on your whitest
Bridal robe of spotless snow:
For Christmas bringeth Jesus,
Brought for us so low.

Before 1886.

CHRISTMAS DAY

A BABY is a harmless thing
And wins our hearts with one
accord,
And Flower of Babies was their
King,
Jesus Christ our Lord:
Lily of lilies He
Upon His Mother's knee;
Rose of roses, soon to be
Crowned with thorns on leafless
tree.

A lamb is innocent and mild
And merry on the soft green sod;
And Jesus Christ, the Undefiled,
Is the Lamb of God:
Only spotless He
Upon his Mother's knee;
White and ruddy, soon to be
Sacrificed for you and me.

Nay, lamb is not so sweet a word,
Nor lily half so pure a name;
Another name our hearts hath stirred,
Kindling them to flame:
'Jesus' certainly
Is music and melody:
Heart with heart in harmony
Carol we and worship we.

Before 1886.

CHRISTMASTIDE

LOVE came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, Love Divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and Angels gave the sign.

Worship we the Godhead,
Love Incarnate, Love Divine;
Worship we our Jesus:
But wherewith for sacred sign?

Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine,
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.

Before 1886.

ST. JOHN, APOSTLE

EARTH cannot bar flame from ascending,
Hell cannot bind light from descending,
Death cannot finish life never ending.

Eagle and sun gaze at each other,
Eagle at sun, brother at Brother,
Loving in peace and joy one another.

O St. John, with chains for thy wages,
Strong thy rock where the storm-blast rages,
Rock of refuge, the Rock of Ages.

Rome hath passed with her awful voice,
Earth is passing with all her joys,
Heaven shall pass away with a noise.

So from us all follies that please us,
So from us all falsehoods that ease us,—
Only all saints abide with their Jesus.

Jesus, in love looking down hither,
Jesus, by love draw us up thither,
That we in Thee may abide together.

Before 1893.

'BELOVED, let us love one another,' says St. John,
Eagle of eagles calling from above:
Words of strong nourishment for life to feed upon,
'Beloved, let us love.'

Voice of an eagle, yea, Voice of the Dove:
If we may love, winter is past and gone;
Publish we, praise we, for lo it is enough.

More sunny than sunshine that ever yet shone,
Sweetener of the bitter, smoother of the rough,
Highest lesson of all lessons for all to con,
'Beloved, let us love.'

Before 1886.

HOLY INNOCENTS

THEY scarcely waked before they slept,
They scarcely wept before they laughed;
They drank indeed death's bitter draught,
But all its bitterest dregs were kept
And drained by Mothers while they wept.

From Heaven the speechless Infants speak :
Weep not (they say), our Mothers dear,
For swords nor sorrows come not here.
Now we are strong who were so weak,
And all is ours we could not seek.

We bloom among the blooming flowers,
We sing among the singing birds ;
Wisdom we have who wanted words :
Here morning knows not evening hours,
All's rainbow here without the showers.

And softer than our Mother's breast,
And closer than our Mother's arm,
Is here the Love that keeps us warm
And broods above our happy nest.
Dear Mothers, come : for Heaven is best.

Circa 1877.

UNSPOTTED lambs to follow the one Lamb,
Unspotted doves to wait on the one Dove ;
To whom Love saith, 'Be with Me where I am.'
And lo their answer unto Love is love.

For tho' I know not any note they know,
Nor know one word of all their song above,
I know Love speaks to them, and even so
I know the answer unto Love is love.

Before 1893.

EPIPHANY

'LORD Babe, if Thou art He
We sought for patiently,
Where is Thy court ?
Hither may prophecy and star resort ;
Men heed not their report.'—
'Bow down and worship, righteous man :
This Infant of a span
Is He man sought for since the world began ! '—
'Then, Lord, accept my gold, too base a thing
For Thee, of all kings King.'—

'Lord Babe, despite Thy youth
I hold Thee of a truth
Both Good and Great :
But wherefore dost Thou keep so mean a state,
Low-lying desolate ? '—
'Bow down and worship, righteous seer :
The Lord our God is here
Approachable, Who bids us all draw near.'—
'Wherefore to Thee I offer frankincense,
Thou Sole Omnipotence.'—

'But I have only brought
Myrrh ; no wise afterthought
Instructed me
To gather pearls or gems, or choice to see
Coral or ivory.'—

'Not least thine offering proves thee wise:
For myrrh means sacrifice,
And He that lives, this Same is He that dies.'—
'Then here is myrrh: alas, yea woe is me
That myrrh befitteth Thee.'—

Myrrh, frankincense, and gold:
And lo from wintry fold
Good-will doth bring
A Lamb, the innocent likeness of this King
Whom stars and seraphs sing:
And lo the bird of love, a Dove,
Flutters and coos above:
And Dove and Lamb and Babe agree in love:—
Come all mankind, come all creation hither,
Come, worship Christ together.

Before 1886.

EPIPHANYTIDE

TREMBLING before Thee we fall down to adore Thee,
Shamefaced and trembling we lift our eyes to Thee:
O First and with the last! annul our ruined past,
Rebuild us to Thy glory, set us free
From sin and from sorrow to fall down and worship Thee.

Full of pity view us, stretch Thy sceptre to us,
Bid us live that we may give ourselves to Thee:
O faithful Lord and true! stand up for us and do,
Make us lovely, make us new, set us free—
Heart and soul and spirit—to bring all and worship Thee.

Before 1893.

SEPTUAGESIMA

'So run that ye may obtain.'

ONE step more, and the race is ended;
One word more, and the lesson's done;
One toil more, and a long rest follows
At set of sun.

Who would fail, for one step withholden?
Who would fail, for one word unsaid?
Who would fail, for a pause too early?
Sound sleep the dead.

One step more, and the goal receives us;
One word more, and life's task is done;
One toil more, and the Cross is carried
And sets the sun.

Before 1886.

SEXAGESIMA

'Cursed is the ground for thy sake.'

YET earth was very good in days of old,
And earth is lovely still:
Still for the sacred flock she spreads the fold,
For Sion rears the hill.

Mother she is and cradle of our race,
A depth where treasures lie,
The broad foundation of a holy place,
Man's step to scale the sky.

She spreads the harvest-field which Angels reap,
And lo the crop is white ;
She spreads God's Acre where the happy sleep
All night that is not night.

Earth may not pass till heaven shall pass away,
Nor heaven may be renewed
Except with earth : and once more in that day
Earth shall be very good.

Before 1893.

THAT Eden of earth's sunrise cannot vie
With Paradise beyond her sunset sky
Hidden on high.

Four rivers watered Eden in her bliss,
But Paradise hath One which perfect is
In sweetnesses.

Eden had gold, but Paradise hath gold
Like unto glass of splendours manifold
Tongue hath not told.

Eden had sun and moon to make her bright ;
But Paradise hath God and Lamb for light,
And hath no night.

Unspotted innocence was Eden's best ;
Great Paradise shows God's fulfilled behest,
Triumph and rest.

Hail, Eve and Adam, source of death and shame !
New life has sprung from death, and Jesu's Name
Clothes you with fame.

Hail Adam, and hail Eve ! your children rise
And call you blessed, in their glad surmise
Of Paradise.

Before 1893.

QUINQUAGESIMA

LOVE is alone the worthy law of love :
All other laws have presupposed a taint :
Love is the law from kindled saint to saint,
From lamb to lamb, from dove to answering dove.
Love is the motive of all things that move
Harmonious by free will without constraint :
Love learns and teaches : love shall man acquaint
With all he lacks, which all his lack is love.
Because Love is the fountain, I discern
The stream as love : for what but love should flow
From fountain Love ? not bitter from the sweet !
I ignorant, have I laid claim to know ?
Oh teach me, Love, such knowledge as is meet
For one to know who is fain to love and learn.

Before 1893.

PITEOUS my rhyme is
What while I muse of love and pain,
Of love mis-spent, of love in vain,
Of love that is not loved again:
And is this all then?
As long as time is,
Love loveth. Time is but a span,
The dalliance space of dying man:
And is this all immortals can?
The gain were small then.

Love loves for ever,
And finds a sort of joy in pain,
And gives with nought to take again,
And loves too well to end in vain:
Is the gain small then?
Love laughs at 'never,'
Outlives our life, exceeds the span
Appointed to mere mortal man:
All which love is and does and can
Is all in all then.
Before 1886.

ASH WEDNESDAY

MY God, my God, have mercy on
my sin,
For it is great; and if I should begin
To tell it all, the day would be too
small
To tell it in.

My God, Thou wilt have mercy on
my sin
For Thy Love's sake: yea, if I should
begin
To tell This all, the day would be
too small
To tell it in.
Before 1886.

OOD Lord, to-day
scarce find breath to say:
Scourge, but receive me.
For stripes are hard to bear, but
worse
Thy intolerable curse;
So do not leave me.

Good Lord, lean down
In pity, tho' Thou frown;
Smite, but retrieve me:
For so Thou hold me up to stand
And kiss Thy smiting hand,
It less will grieve me.
Before 1893.

LENT

IT is good to be last not first,
Pending the present distress;
It is good to hunger and thirst,
So it be for righteousness.
It is good to spend and be spent,
It is good to watch and to pray:
Life and Death make a goodly Lent
So it leads us to Easter Day.
Before 1886.

EMBERTIDE

I SAW a Saint.—How canst thou
tell that he
Thou sawest was a Saint?—
I saw one like to Christ so lumin-
ously
By patient deeds of love, his
mortal taint
Seemed made his groundwork for
humility.

And when he marked me downcast
utterly
Where foul I sat and faint,
Then more than ever Christ-like
kindled he;
And welcomed me as I had been
a saint,
Tenderly stooping low to comfort me.

Christ bade him, 'Do thou likewise.'
Wherefore he
Waxed zealous to acquaint
His soul with sin and sorrow, if so be
He might retrieve some latent saint:—
'Lo, I, with the child God hath given to me!'

Before 1893.

MID-LENT

Is any grieved or tired? Yea, by God's Will:
Surely God's Will alone is good and best:
O weary man, in weariness take rest,
O hungry man, by hunger feast thy fill.
Discern thy good beneath a mask of ill,
Or build of loneliness thy secret nest:
At noon take heart, being mindful of the west;
At night wake hope, for dawn advances still.
At night wake hope. Poor soul, in such sore need
Of wakening and of girding up anew,
Hast thou that hope which fainting doth pursue?
No saint but hath pursued and hath been faint;
Bid love wake hope, for both thy steps shall speed,
Still faint yet still pursuing, O thou saint.

Before 1886.

PASSIONTIDE

It is the greatness of Thy love, dear Lord, that we would celebrate
With sevenfold powers.
Our love at best is cold and poor, at best unseemly for Thy state,
This best of ours.
Creatures that die, we yet are such as Thine own hands deigned to create:
We frail as flowers,
We bitter bondslaves ransomed at a price incomparably great
To grace Heaven's bowers.

Thou callest: 'Come at once'—and still Thou callest us: 'Come late, tho' late'—
(The moments fly)—
'Come, every one that thirsteth, come — Come prove Me, knocking at My gate'—
(Some souls draw nigh!)—
'Come thou who waiting seekest Me—Come thou for whom I seek and wait'—
(Why will we die?)—
'Come and repent: come and amend: come joy the joys unsatiate'—
—(Christ passeth by . . .)—
Lord, pass not by—I come—and I—and I. Amen.

Before 1893.

PALM SUNDAY

'He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.'

I LIFT mine eyes, and see
Thee, tender Lord, in pain upon the tree,
Athirst for my sake and athirst for me.

'Yea, look upon Me there,
Compassed with thorns and bleeding everywhere,
For thy sake bearing all, and glad to bear.'

I lift my heart to pray:
Thou Who didst love me all that darkened day,
Wilt Thou not love me to the end alway?

'Yea, thee My wandering sheep,
Yea, thee My scarlet sinner slow to weep,
Come to Me, I will love thee and will keep.'

Yet am I racked with fear:
Behold the unending outer darkness drear,
Behold the gulf unbridgeable and near!

'Nay, fix thy heart, thine eyes,
Thy hope upon My boundless sacrifice:
Will I lose lightly one so dear-bought prize?'

Ah Lord, it is not Thou,
Thou that wilt fail; yet woe is me, for how
Shall I endure who half am failing now?

'Nay, weld thy resolute will
To Mine: glance not aside for good or ill:
I love thee; trust Me still and love Me still.'

Yet Thou Thyself hast said,
When Thou shalt sift the living from the dead
Some must depart shamed and uncomforted.

'Judge not before that day:
Trust Me with all thy heart, even tho' I slay:
Trust Me in love, trust on, love on, and pray.'

Before 1893.

MONDAY IN HOLY WEEK

'The Voice of my Beloved.'

ONCE I ached for thy dear sake:
Wilt thou cause Me now to ache?
Once I bled for thee in pain:
Wilt thou rend My Heart again?
Crown of thorns and shameful tree,
Bitter death I bore for thee,
Bore My Cross to carry thee,
And wilt thou have nought of Me?

1853.

TUESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

BY Thy long-drawn anguish to atone,
Jesus Christ, show mercy on Thine own:
Jesus Christ, show mercy and atone
Not for other sake except Thine own.

Thou Who thirsting on the Cross didst see
All mankind and all I love and me,
Still from Heaven look down in love and see
All mankind and all I love and me.

Before 1886.

WEDNESDAY IN HOLY WEEK

MAN'S life is death. Yet Christ endured to live,
Preaching and teaching, toiling to and fro,
Few men accepting what He yearned to give,
Few men with eyes to know
His Face, that Face of Love He stooped to show.

Man's death is life. For Christ endured to die
In slow unuttered weariness of pain,
A curse and an astonishment, passed by,
Pointed at, mocked again
By men for whom He shed His Blood—in vain?

Before 1886.

MAUNDY THURSDAY

'And the Vine said . . . Should I leave my wine which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

THE great Vine left its glory to reign as Forest King.
'Nay,' quoth the lofty forest trees, 'we will not have this thing;
We will not have this supple one enring us with its ring.
Lo from immemorial time our might towers shadowing:
Not we were born to curve and droop, not we to climb and cling:
We buffet back the buffeting wind, tough to its buffeting:
We screen great beasts, the wild fowl build in our heads and sing,
Every bird of every feather from off our tops takes wing:
I a king, and thou a king, and what king shall be our king?'

Nevertheless the great Vine stooped to be the Forest King,
While the forest swayed and murmured like seas that are tempesting:
Stooped and drooped with thousand tendrils in thirsty languishing;
Bowed to earth and lay on earth for earth's replenishing;
Put off sweetness, tasted bitterness, endured time's fashioning;
Put off life and put on death:—and lo it was all to bring
All its fellows down to a death which hath lost the sting,
All its fellows up to a life in endless triumphing,—
I a king, and thou a king, and this King to be our King.

Before 1886.

GOOD FRIDAY MORNING

'Bearing His Cross.'

UP Thy Hill of Sorrows
Thou all alone,
Jesus, man's Redeemer,
Climbing to a Throne:
Thro' the world triumphant,
Thro' the Church in pain,
Which think to look upon Thee
No more again.

Upon my hill of sorrows
I, Lord, with Thee,
Cheered, upheld, yea carried
If a need should be:

Cheered, upheld, yea carried,
Never left alone,
Carried in Thy heart of hearts
To a throne.
1893.

GOOD FRIDAY

LORD Jesus Christ, grown faint upon the Cross,
A sorrow beyond sorrow in Thy look,
The unutterable craving for my soul;
Thy love of me sufficed
To load upon Thee and make good my loss
In face of darkened heaven and earth that shook:—
In face of earth and heaven, take Thou my whole
Heart, O Lord Jesus Christ.
Before 1886.

GOOD FRIDAY EVENING

'Bring forth the Spear.'

No Cherub's heart or hand for us might ache,
No Seraph's heart of fire had half sufficed:
Thine own were pierced and broken for our sake,
O Jesus Christ.

Therefore we love Thee with our faint good-will,
We crave to love Thee not as heretofore,
To love Thee much, to love Thee more, and still
More and yet more.
Before 1893.

'A bundle of myrrh is my Well-beloved unto me.'

THY Cross cruciferous doth flower in all
And every cross, dear Lord, assigned to us:
Ours lowly-statured crosses; Thine how tall,
Thy Cross cruciferous.

Thy Cross alone life-giving, glorious:
For love of Thine, souls love their own when small,
Easy and light, or great and ponderous.

Since deep calls deep, Lord, hearken when we call;
When cross calls Cross racking and emulous:—
Remember us with him who shared Thy gall,
Thy Cross cruciferous.
Before 1893.

EASTER EVEN

THE tempest over and gone, the calm begun,
Lo, 'it is finished' and the Strong Man sleeps:
All stars keep vigil watching for the sun,
The moon her vigil keeps.

A garden full of silence and of dew
Beside a virgin cave and entrance stone:
Surely a garden full of Angels too,
Wondering, on watch, alone.

They who cry 'Holy, Holy, Holy,' still
Veiling their faces round God's Throne above,
May well keep vigil on this heavenly hill
And cry their cry of love,

Adoring God in His new mystery
Of Love more deep than hell, more strong than death;
Until the day break and the shadows flee,
The Shaking and the Breath.

Before 1886.

(Our Church Palms are budding willow twigs.)

WHILE Christ lay dead the widowed world
Wore willow green for hope undone:
Till, when bright Easter dews impearled
The chilly burial earth,
All north and south, all east and west,
Flushed rosy in the arising sun;
Hope laughed, and Faith resumed her rest,
And Love remembered mirth.

Before 1893.

EASTER DAY

WORDS cannot utter
Christ His returning:
Mankind, keep jubilee,
Strip off your mourning,
Crown you with garlands,
Set your lamps burning.
Speech is left speechless;
Set you to singing,
Fling your hearts open wide,
Set your bells ringing:
Christ the Chief Reaper
Comes, His sheaf bringing.

Earth wakes her song-birds,
Puts on her flowers,
Leads out her lambkins,
Builds up her bowers:
This is man's spousal day,
Christ's day and ours.

Before 1886.

EASTER MONDAY

OUT in the rain a world is growing green,
On half the trees quick buds are seen
Where glued-up buds have been.
Out in the rain God's Acre stretches green,
Its harvest quick tho' still unseen:
For there the Life hath been.

If Christ hath died His brethren well may die,
Sing in the gate of death, lay by
This life without a sigh:
For Christ hath died and good it is to die;
To sleep when so He lays us by,
Then wake without a sigh.

Yea, Christ hath died, yea, Christ is risen again:
Wherefore both life and death grow plain
To us who wax and wane;

For Christ Who rose shall die no more again :
Amen : till He makes all things plain
Let us wax on and wane.

Before 1886.

EASTER TUESDAY

'TOGETHER with my dead body shall they arise.'
Shall my dead body arise ? then amen and yea
On track of a home beyond the uttermost skies
Together with my dead body shall they.

We know the way : thank God Who hath showed us the way !
Jesus Christ our Way to beautiful Paradise,
Jesus Christ the Same for ever, the Same to-day.

Five Virgins replenish with oil their lamps, being wise,
Five Virgins awaiting the Bridegroom watch and pray :
And if I one day spring from my grave to the prize,
Together with my dead body shall they.

Before 1893.

ROGATIONTIDE

WHO scatters tares shall reap no wheat,
But go hungry while others eat.

Who sows the wind shall not reap grain ;
The sown wind whirleth back again.

What God opens must open be,
Tho' man pile the sand of the sea.

What God shuts is opened no more,
Tho' man weary himself to find the door.

Before 1886.

ASCENSION EVE

O LORD Almighty Who hast formed us weak,
With us whom Thou hast formed deal fatherly ;
Be found of us whom Thou hast deigned to seek,
Be found that we the more may seek for Thee ;
Lord, speak and grant us ears to hear Thee speak ;
Lord, come to us and grant us eyes to see ;
Lord, make us meek, for Thou Thyself art meek ;
Lord, Thou art Love, fill us with charity.
O Thou the Life of living and of dead,
Who givest more the more Thyself hast given,
Suffice us as Thy saints Thou hast sufficed ;
That beautified, replenished, comforted,
Still gazing off from earth and up at heaven,
We may pursue Thy steps, Lord Jesus Christ.

Before 1893.

ASCENSION DAY

'A Cloud received Him out of their sight.'

WHEN Christ went up to Heaven
the Apostles stayed
Gazing at Heaven with souls and
wills on fire,
Their hearts on flight along the
track He made,
Winged by desire.

Their silence spake: 'Lord, why
not follow Thee?
Home is not home without Thy
Blessed Face,
Life is not life. Remember, Lord,
and see,
Look back, embrace.

'Earth is one desert waste of
banishment,
Life is one long-drawn anguish of
decay.
Where Thou wert wont to go we
also went:
Why not to-day?'

Nevertheless a cloud cut off their
gaze:
They tarry to build up Jerusalem,
Watching for Him, while thro' the
appointed days
He watches them.

They do His Will, and doing it
rejoice,
Patiently glad to spend and to be
spent:
Still He speaks to them, still they
hear His Voice
And are content.

For as a cloud received Him from
their sight,
So with a cloud will He return
ere long:
Therefore they stand on guard by
day, by night,
Strenuous and strong.

They do, they dare, they beyond
seven times seven
Forgive, they cry God's mighty
word aloud:
Yet sometimes haply lift tired eyes
to Heaven—
'Is that His cloud?'

Before 1886.

WHITSUN EVE

'AS many as I love.'—Ah Lord,
Who lovest all,
If thus it is with Thee why sit
remote above,
Beholding from afar, stumbling and
marred and small,
So many Thou dost love?

Whom sin and sorrow make their
worn reluctant thrall;
Who fain would flee away but
lack the wings of dove;
Who long for love and rest; who
look to Thee, and call
To Thee for rest and love.

Before 1893.

WHITSUN DAY

'When the Day of Pentecost was
fully come.'

AT sound as of rushing wind, and
sight as of fire,
Lo flesh and blood made spirit
and fiery flame,

Ambassadors in Christ's and the
Father's Name,
To woo back a world's desire.

These men chose death for their life
and shame for their boast,
For fear courage, for doubt in-
tuition of faith,
Chose love that is strong as death
and stronger than death
In the power of the Holy Ghost.

Before 1886.

WHITSUN MONDAY

'A pure River of Water of Life.'

WE know not a voice of that River,
If vocal or silent it be,
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows to no sea.

More deep than the seas is that River,
More full than their manifold tides,
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows and abides.

Pure gold is the bed of that River
(The gold of that land is the best),
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows on at rest.

Oh goodly the banks of that River,
Oh goodly the fruits that they bear,
Where for ever and ever and ever
It flows and is fair.

For lo on each bank of that River
The Tree of Life life-giving grows,
Where for ever and ever and ever
The Pure River flows.

Before 1893.

WHITSUN TUESDAY

LORD Jesus Christ, our Wisdom and
our Rest,
Who wisely dost reveal and wisely
hide,
Grant us such grace in wisdom to
abide
According to Thy Will whose Will
is best.
Contented with Thine uttermost be-
hest,
Too sweet for envy and too high
for pride;
All simple-souled, dove-hearted
and dove-eyed,
Soft-voiced, and satisfied in humble
nest.
Wondering at the bounty of Thy
Love
Which gives us wings of silver
and of gold;
Wings folded close, yet ready to
unfold
When Thou shalt say, 'Winter
is past and gone:'
When Thou shalt say, 'Spouse,
sister, love and dove,
Come hither, sit with Me upon
My Throne.'

Before 1886.

TRINITY SUNDAY

MY God, Thyself being Love Thy
heart is love,
And love Thy Will and love Thy
Word to us,
Whether Thou show us depths
calamitous
Or heights and flights of rapturous
peace above.

O Christ the Lamb, O Holy Ghost the Dove,
Reveal the Almighty Father unto us;
That we may tread Thy courts felicitous,
Loving Who loves us, for our God is Love.
Lo, if our God be Love thro' heaven's long day,
Love is He thro' our mortal pilgrimage,
Love was He thro' all aeons that are told.
We change, but Thou remainest; for Thine age
Is, Was, and Is to come, nor new nor old;
We change, but Thou remainest; yea and yea!

Before 1893.

CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL.

O BLESSED Paul elect to grace,
Arise and wash away thy sin,
Anoint thy head and wash thy face,
Thy gracious course begin.
To start thee on thy outrunning race
Christ shows the splendour of His Face:
What will that Face of splendour be
When at the goal He welcomes thee?

Before 1886.

IN weariness and painfulness St. Paul
Served God and pleased Him: after-saints no less
Can wait on and can please Him, one and all
In weariness and painfulness,
By faith and hope triumphant thro' distress;
Not with the rankling service of a thrall;
But even as loving children trust and bless,

Weep and rejoice, answering their Father's call,
Work with tired hands, and forward upward press
On sore tired feet still rising when they fall,
In weariness and painfulness.

Before 1886.

VIGIL OF THE PRESENTATION

LONG and dark the nights, dim and short the days,
Mounting weary heights on our weary ways,
Thee our God we praise.
Scaling heavenly heights by no earthly ways,
Thee our God we praise all our nights and days,
Thee our God we praise.

Before 1893.

FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION

O FIRSTFRUITS of our grain,
Infant and Lamb appointed to be slain,
A Virgin and two doves were all Thy train,
With one old man for state,
When Thou didst enter first Thy Father's gate.

Since then Thy train hath been
Freeman and bondman, bishop, king and queen,

With flaming candles and with garlands green :
Oh happy all who wait
One day or thousand days around Thy gate !

And these have offered Thee,
Beside their hearts, great stores for charity,
Gold, frankincense, and myrrh ; if such may be
For savour or for state
Within the threshold of Thy golden gate.

Then snowdrops and my heart
I'll bring, to find those blacker than Thou art :
Yet, loving Lord, accept us in good part ;
And give me grace to wait,
A bruisèd reed bowed low before Thy gate.

Circa 1877.

THE PURIFICATION OF ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

Purity born of a Maid :
Was such a Virgin defiled ?
Nay, by no shade of a shade.
She offered her gift of pure love,
A dove with a fair fellow-dove.
She offered her Innocent Child
The Essence and Author of Love ;
The Lamb that indwelt by the Dove
Was spotless and holy and mild ;
More pure than all other,
More pure than His Mother,
Her God and Redeemer and Child.

Before 1880.

VIGIL OF THE ANNUNCIATION

All weareth, all wasteth,
All flitteth, all hasteth,
All of flesh and time :
Sound, sweet heavenly chime,
Ring in the unutterable eternal prime.

Man hopeth, man feareth,
Man droopeth :—Christ cheereth,
Compassing release,
Comforting with peace,
Promising rest where strife and anguish cease.

Saints waking, saints sleeping,
Rest well in safe keeping ;
Well they rest to-day
While they watch and pray,
But their to-morrow's rest what tongue shall say ?

Before 1893.

FEAST OF THE ANNUNCIATION

Whereto shall we liken this Blessed Mary Virgin,
Fruitful shoot from Jesse's root graciously emerging ?
Lily we might call her, but Christ alone is white ;
Rose delicious, but that Jesus is the one Delight ;
Flower of women, but her Firstborn is mankind's one flower :
He the Sun lights up all moons thro' their radiant hour.
'Blessed among women, highly favoured,' thus
Glorious Gabriel hailed her, teaching words to us :

Whom devoutly copying we too cry
'All hail!'
Echoing on the music of glorious
Gabriel.

Before 1886.

HERSELF a rose, who bore the Rose,
She bore the Rose and felt its
thorn.
All Loveliness new-born
Took on her bosom its repose,
And slept and woke there night
and morn.

Lily herself, she bore the one
Fair Lily; sweeter, whiter, far
Than she or others are:
The Sun of Righteousness her Son,
She was His morning star.

She gracious, He essential Grace,
He was the Fountain, she the rill:
Her goodness to fulfil
And gladness, with proportioned pace
He led her steps thro' good and
ill.

Christ's mirror she of grace and love,
Of beauty and of life and death:
By hope and love and faith
Transfigured to His Likeness, 'Dove,
Spouse, Sister, Mother,' Jesus
saith.

Circa 1877.

ST. MARK

ONCE like a broken bow Mark
sprang aside:
Yet grace recalled him to a worthier
course,
To feeble hands and knees increas-
ing force,
Till God was magnified.

And now a strong Evangelist, St
Mark
Hath for his sign a Lion in his
strength;
And thro' the stormy water's breadth
and length
He helps to steer God's Ark.

Thus calls he sinners to be peni
tents,
He kindles penitents to high desire
He mounts before them to the spher
of saints,
And bids them come up higher.

Circa 1877.

ST. BARNABAS

'Now when we had discovered Cyprus, w
left it on the left hand.'—*Acts* xxi. 3.
'We sailed under Cyprus, because th
winds were contrary.'—*Acts* xxvii. 4.

ST. BARNABAS, with John his sister'
son,
Set sail for Cyprus; leaving i
their wake
That Chosen Vessel who for Jesus
sake
Proclaimed the Gentiles and th
Jews at one.
Divided while united, each must ru
His mighty course not hell shoul
overtake;
And pressing toward the mar
must own the ache
Of love, and sigh for heaven not ye
begun.
For saints in life-long exile yearn t
touch
Warm human hands, and con
mune face to face:
But these we know not eve
met again:

Yet once St. Paul at distance overmuch
Just sighted Cyprus; and once more in vain
Neared it and passed;—not there his landing-place.

Circa 1877.

VIGIL OF ST. PETER

O JESU, gone so far apart
Only my heart can follow Thee,
That look which pierced St. Peter's heart
Turn now on me.

Thou who dost search me thro' and thro'
And mark the crooked ways I went,
Look on me, Lord, and make me too
Thy penitent.

Before 1893.

ST. PETER

'LAUNCH out into the deep,' Christ spake of old
To Peter: and he launched into the deep;
Strengthened should tempest wake which lay asleep,
Strengthened to suffer heat or suffer cold.
Thus, in Christ's Prescience: patient to behold
A fall, a rise, a scaling Heaven's high steep;
Prescience of Love, which deigned to overleap
The mire of human errors manifold.
Lord, Lover of Thy Peter, and of him
Beloved with craving of a humbled heart
Which eighteen hundred years have satisfied;
Hath he his throne among Thy Seraphim
Who love? or sits he on a throne apart,
Unique, near Thee, to love Thee human-eyed?

Before 1893.

ST. PETER once: 'Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?'—
Much more I say: Lord, dost Thou stand and knock
At my closed heart more rugged than a rock,
Bolted and barred, for Thy soft touch unmeet,
Nor garnished nor in any wise made sweet?
Owls roost within and dancing satyrs mock.
Lord, I have heard the crowing of the cock
And have not wept: ah, Lord, Thou knowest it.
Yet still I hear Thee knocking, still I hear:
'Open to Me, look on Me eye to eye,
That I may wring thy heart and make it whole;
And teach thee love because I hold thee dear,
And sup with thee in gladness soul with soul,
And sup with thee in glory by and by.'

Before 1893.

I FOLLOWED Thee, my God, I
followed Thee
To see the end:
I turned back flying from Gethse-
mane,
Turned back on flying steps to see
Thy Face, my God, my Friend.

Even fleeing from Thee my heart
clave to Thee:
I turned perforce
Constrained, yea chained by love
which maketh free:
I turned perforce, and silently
Followed along Thy course.

Lord, didst Thou know that I was
following Thee?
I weak and small
Yet Thy true lover, mean tho' I must
be,
Sinning and sorrowing—didst Thou
see?
O Lord, Thou sawest all.

I thought I had been strong to die
for Thee;
I disbelieved
Thy word of warning spoken
patiently:
My heart cried, 'That be far from
me,'
Till Thy bruised heart I grieved.

Once I had urged: 'Lord, this be
far from Thee':—
Rebel to light,
It needed first that Thou shouldst
die for me
Or ever I could plumb and see
Love's lovely depth and height.

Alas that I should trust myself, no
Thee;
Not trust Thy word:
I faithless slumberer in Gethsemane
Blinded and rash; who instantly
Put trust, but in a sword.

Ah Lord, if even at the last in The
I had put faith,
I might even at the last have coun
selled me,
And not have heaped up cruelty
To sting Thee in Thy death.

Alas for me, who bore to think o
Thee
And yet to lie!
While Thou, O Lord, didst bear t
look on me
Goaded by fear to blasphemy,
And break my heart and die.

No balm I find in Gilead, yet in The
Nailed to Thy palm
I find a balm that wrings and com
forts me:
Balm wrung from Thee by agony,
My balm, mine only balm.

Oh blessed John who standeth clos
to Thee,
With Magdalene,
And Thine own Mother prayin
silently,
Yea, blessed above women she,
Now blessed even as then.

And blessed the scorned thief wh
hangs by Thee,
Whose thirsting mouth
Thirsts for Thee more than wate
whose eyes see,
Whose lips confess in ecstasy
Nor feel their parching drouth.

ike as the hart the water-brooks I
Thee
Desire, my hands
stretch to Thee; O kind Lord,
pity me:
ord, I have wept, wept bitterly,
I driest of dry lands.

ord, I am standing far far off from
Thee;
Yet is my heart
anging with Thee upon the ac-
cursed tree;
he nails, the thorns, pierce Thee
and me:
My God, I claim my part—

carce in Thy throne and kingdom;
yet with Thee
In shame, in loss,
n Thy forsaking, in Thine agony:
ove crucified, behold even me,
Me also bear Thy cross.

Circa 1877.

VIGIL OF ST. BARTHOLOMEW

ORD, to Thine own grant watchful
hearts and eyes;
Hearts strung to prayer, awake
while eyelids sleep;
Eyes patient till the end to watch
and weep.
will sleep nourish power to wake
and rise
ith Virgins who keep vigil and
are wise,
To sow among all sowers who
shall reap,
From out man's deep to call Thy
vaster deep,
d tread the uphill track to
Paradise.

Sweet souls! so patient that they
make no moan,
So calm on journey that they
seem at rest,
So rapt in prayer that half they
dwell in heaven,
Thankful for all withheld and
all things given;
So lit by love that Christ shines
manifest
Transfiguring their aspects to His
own.

Before 1893.

ST. BARTHOLOMEW

HE bore an agony whereof the
name
Hath turned his fellows pale:
But what if God should call us to
the same,
Should call, and we should fail?

Nor earth nor sea could swallow up
our shame,
Nor darkness draw a veil:
For he endured that agony whose
name
Hath made his fellows quail.

Before 1886.

ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS

'Ye that excel in strength.'

SERVICE and strength, God's Angels
and Archangels;
His Seraphs fires, and lamps His
Cherubim:
Glory to God from highest and from
lowest,
Glory to God in everlasting hymn
From all His creatures.

Princes that serve, and Powers that work His pleasure,
Heights that soar to'ard Him, Depths that sink to'ard Him;
Flames fire out-flaming, chill beside His Essence;
Insight all-probing, save where scant and dim
To'ard its Creator.

Sacred and free exultant in God's pleasure,
His Will their solace, thus they wait on Him;
And shout their shout of ecstasy eternal,
And trim their splendours that they burn not dim
To'ard their Creator.

Wherefore with Angels, wherefore with Archangels,
With lofty Cherubs, loftier Seraphim,
We laud and magnify our God Almighty,
And veil our faces rendering love to Him
With all His creatures.

Circa 1877.

VIGIL OF ALL SAINTS

UP, my drowsing eyes!
Up, my sinking heart!
Up to Jesus Christ arise!
Claim your part
In all raptures of the skies.

Yet a little while.
Yet a little way,
Saints shall reap and rest and smile
All the day.
Up! let's trudge another mile.

Before 1886.

ALL SAINTS

As grains of sand, as stars, as drops of dew,
Numbered and treasured by the Almighty Hand,
The Saints triumphant throng that holy land
Where all things and Jerusalem are new.
We know not half they sing or half they do,
But this we know, they rest and understand;
While like a conflagration freshly fanned
Their love glows upward, outward, thro' and thro'.
Lo like a stream of incense launched on flame
Fresh Saints stream up from death to life above,
To shine among those others and rejoice:
What matters tribulation whence they came?
All love and only love can find a voice
Where God makes glad His Saints, for God is Love.

Before 1886.

ALL SAINTS: MARTYRS

ONCE slain for Him who first was slain for them,
Now made alive in Him for evermore,
All luminous and lovely in their gore,
With no more buffeting winds or tides to stem,
The Martyrs look for New Jerusalem

And cry 'How long?' remembering all they bore,
'How long?' with heart and eyes sent on before
oward consummated throne and diadem.
How long?' White robes are given to their desire;
'How long?' deep rest that is and is to be;
With a great promise of the oncoming host,
oves to their love and fires to flank their fire:
So rest they, worshiping incessantly
One God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Before 1893.

'I gave a sweet smell.'

AINTS are like roses when they flush rarest,
ints are like lilies when they bloom fairest,
Saints are like violets sweetest of their kind:
Bear in mind
This to-day. Then to-morrow:
l like roses rarer than the rarest,
l like lilies fairer than the fairest,
All like violets sweeter than we know.
Be it so.
To-morrow blots out sorrow.

ore 1886.

ARK! the Alleluias of the great salvation,
Still beginning, never ending, still begin,
thunder of an endless adoration:
Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation
Which have kept the truth may enter in.

Roll ye back, ye pearls, on your twelvefold station:
No more deaths to die, no more fights to win!
Lift your heads, ye gates, that the righteous nation,
Led by the Great Captain of their sole salvation,
Having kept the truth, may enter in.

Before 1893.

A SONG FOR THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS

LOVE is the key of life and death,
Of hidden heavenly mystery:
Of all Christ is, of all He saith,
Love is the key.

As three times to His Saint He saith,
He saith to me, He saith to thee,
Breathing His Grace-conferring Breath:
'Lovest thou Me?'

Ah, Lord, I have such feeble faith,
Such feeble hope to comfort me:
But love it is, is strong as death,
And I love Thee.

Before 1893.

SUNDAY BEFORE ADVENT

THE end of all things is at hand. We all
Stand in the balance trembling as we stand;
Or if not trembling, tottering to a fall.
The end of all things is at hand.

O hearts of men, covet the unending land !
O hearts of men, covet the musical,
Sweet, never-ending waters of that strand !

While Earth shows poor, a slippery rolling ball,
And Hell looms vast, a gulf unplumbed, unspanned,
And Heaven flings wide its gates to great and small,
The end of all things is at hand.

Before 1893.

THERE REMAINETH THEREFORE A REST

In the grave will be no space
For the purple of the proud—
They must mingle with the crowd :
In the wrappings of a shroud
Jewels would be out of place.

There no laughter shall be heard,
Nor the heavy sound of sighs :
Sleep shall seal the aching eyes :
All the ancient and the wise
There shall utter not a word.

Yet it may be we shall hear
How the mounting skylark sings
And the bell for matins rings ;
Or perhaps the whisperings
Of white Angels sweet and clear.

What a calm when all is done,
Wearing vigil, prayer, and fast !
All fulfilled from first to last :
All the length of time gone past
And eternity begun.

Fear and hope and chastening rod
Urge us on the narrow way :
Bear we still as best we may
Heat and burden of the day,
Struggling, panting up to God.

17 February 1854.

PARADISE

Once in a dream I saw the flowers
That bud and bloom in Paradise
More fair they are than waking eyes
Have seen in all this world of ours.
And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
And faint the lily on its stem,
And faint the perfect violet,
Compared with them.

I heard the songs of Paradise :
Each bird sat singing in his place
A tender song so full of grace
It soared like incense to the skies.
Each bird sat singing to his mate
Soft cooing notes among the trees
The nightingale herself were cold
To such as these.

I saw the fourfold River flow,
And deep it was, with golden sand
It flowed between a mossy land
With murmured music grave and low
It hath refreshment for all thirst,
For fainting spirits strength and rest :
Earth holds not such a draught as this
From east to west.

The Tree of Life stood budding there,
Abundant with its twelvefold fruits ;
Eternal sap sustains its roots,
Its shadowing branches fill the air.

s leaves are healing for the world,
Its fruit the hungry world can feed,
weeter than honey to the taste
And balm indeed.

saw the Gate called Beautiful ;
And looked, but scarce could look within ;
I saw the golden streets begin,
nd outskirts of the glassy pool.
h harps, oh crowns of plenteous stars,
Oh green palm branches many-leaved—
ye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard,
Nor heart conceived.

hope to see these things again,
But not as once in dreams by night ;
To see them with my very sight,
nd touch and handle and attain :
o have all heaven beneath my feet
For narrow way that once they trod ;
o have my part with all the saints,
And with my God.

28 *February* 1854.

YE HAVE FORGOTTEN THE EXHORTATION

ANGEL

BURY thy dead, dear friend,
Between the night and day :
Where depths of summer shade are cool,
And murmurs of a summer pool
And windy murmurs stray :—

SOUL

Ah gone away,
Ah dear and lost delight,
Gone from me and for ever out of sight !

ANGEL

Bury thy dead, dear love,
And make his bed most fair above :
The latest buds shall still
Blow there, and the first violets too,
And there a turtle-dove
Shall brood and coo :—

SOUL

I cannot make the nest
So warm but he may find it chill
In solitary rest.

ANGEL

Bury thy dead heart-deep :
Take patience till the sun be set :
There are no tears for him to weep,
No doubts to haunt him yet :
Take comfort, he will not forget :—

SOUL

Then I will watch beside his sleep :
Will watch alone,
And make my moan
Because the harvest is so long to reap.

ANGEL

The fields are white to harvest, look and see,
Are white abundantly.

The harvest-moon shines full and clear,
The harvest-time is near,
Be of good cheer :—

SOUL

Ah woe is me!
I have no heart for harvest-time,
Grown sick with hope deferred from chime to chime.

ANGEL

But One can give thee heart, thy Lord and his,
Can raise both thee and him
To shine with Seraphim,
And pasture where the eternal fountain is ;
Can give thee of that tree
Whose leaves are health for thee ;
Can give thee robes made clean and white,
And love, and all delight,
And beauty where the day turns not to night.
Who knocketh at His door,
And presseth in, goes out no more.
Kneel as thou hast not knelt before—
The time is short — and smite
Upon thy breast and pray with all thy might :—

SOUL

O Lord, my heart is broken for my sin :
Yet hasten Thine own day
And come away.
Is not time full? Oh put the sickle in,
O Lord, begin!

10 *May* 1854.

THE WORLD

By day she woos me, soft, exceeding fair :
But all night as the moon so changeth she ;
Loathsome and foul with hideous leprosy,
And subtle serpents gliding in her hair.
By day she woos me to the outer air,
Ripe fruits, sweet flowers, and full satiety :
But thro' the night a beast she grins at me,
A very monster void of love and prayer.
By day she stands a lie : by night she stands
In all the naked horror of the truth,
With pushing horns and clawed and clutching hands.
Is this a friend indeed, that I should sell
My soul to her, give her my life and youth,
Till my feet, cloven too, take hold on hell?

27 *June* 1854.

UNFORGOTTEN

O UNFORGOTTEN!
How long ago? one spirit saith.
As long as life even unto death,
The passage of a poor frail breath.

O unforgotten!
An unforgotten load of love,
A load of grief all griefs above,
A blank blank nest without its dove.

As long as time is:—
No longer? Time is but a span.
The dalliance-space of empty man.
And is this all immortals can?

Ever and ever,
Beyond all time, beyond all space:
Now shadows darkening heart and face;
Then glory in a glorious place.

Sad heart and spirit,
Bowed now, yea broken, for a while
Lagging and toiling mile by mile,
Yet pressing toward the Eternal Smile.

O joy eternal!
O youth eternal without flaw!—
Thee not the blessed Angels saw,
Rapt in august adoring awe.

Not the dead have thee,
Not yet, O all-surpassing peace:
Not till this veiling world shall cease
And harvest yield its whole increase.

Not the dead know thee.
Not dead nor living nor unborn:
Who in the new-sown field at morn
Can measure out the harvest corn?

Yet they shall know thee:
And we with them, and unborn men
With us, shall know and have thee when
The single grain shall wax to ten.

1855.

ZION SAID

O SLAIN for love of me, canst Thou be cold,
Be cold and far away in my distress?
Is Thy love also changed, growing less and less,
That carried me through all the days of old?
O Slain for love of me, O Love untold,
See how I flag and fail through weariness:
I flag, while sleepless foes dog me and press
On me: behold, O Lord, O Love, behold!
I am sick for home, the home of love indeed—
I am sick for Love, that dearest name for Thee:
Thou who hast bled, see how my heart doth bleed:
Open Thy bleeding Side and let me in:
Oh hide me in Thy Heart from doubt and sin,
Oh take me to Thyself and comfort me.

31 *December* 1855.

HYMN AFTER GABRIELE ROSSETTI

FIRST VERSION

T' amo e fra dolci affanni.

My Lord, my Love! in love's unrest
How often have I said,
'Blessed that John who on Thy breast
Reclined his head.'

Thy touch it was, Love's Pelican,
Transformed him from above,
And made him amongst men the man
To show forth holy love.

Yet shall I envy blessed John?
Nay not so verily,
While Thou indwellest as Thine own
Me, even me:
Upbuilding with Thy Manhood's worth
My frail humanity;
Yea Thy Divinehood pouring forth,
In fullness filling me.

Me, Lord, Thy temple consecrate,
Me unto Thee alone;
Within my heart set up Thy state
And mount Thy throne:
The Seraphim in ecstasy
Fall prone around Thy house,
For which of them hath tasted Thee,
My Manna and my Spouse?

Now Thou dost wear me for a robe
And sway and warm me through,
I scarce seem lesser than the globe,
Thy temple too:
O God, who for Thy dwelling-place
Dost take delight in me,
The ungirt immensity of space
Hath not encompassed Thee.

SECOND VERSION

My Lord, my Love! in pleasant pain
How often have I said,
'Blessed that John who on Thy breast
Laid down his head.'
It was that contact all divine
Transformed him from above,
And made him amongst men the man
To show forth holy love.

Yet shall I envy blessed John?
Nay not so verily,
Now that Thou, Lord, both Man and God,
Dost dwell in me:
Upbuilding with Thy Manhood's might
My frail humanity;
Yea, Thy Divinehood pouring forth
In fullness filling me.

Me, Lord, Thy temple consecrate,
Even me to Thee alone;
Lord, reign upon my willing heart
Which is Thy throne:
To Thee the Seraphim fall down
Adoring round Thy house;
For which of them hath tasted Thee,
My Manna and my Spouse?

Now that Thy life lives in my soul
And sways and warms it through
I scarce seem lesser than the world,
Thy temple too.
O God, who dwellest in my heart,
My God who fillest me,
The broad immensity itself
Hath not encompassed Thee.

Circa 1855.

I WILL LIFT UP MINE EYES UNTO THE HILLS

I AM pale with sick desire,
For my heart is far away
From this world's fitful fire
And this world's waning day;
In a dream it overleaps
A world of tedious ills
To where the sunshine sleeps
On the everlasting hills.—

Say the Saints: 'There Angels ease us
Glorified and white.'
They say: 'We rest in Jesus,
Where is not day or night.'

My soul saith: I have sought
For a home that is not gained,
I have spent yet nothing bought,
Have laboured but not attained;
My pride strove to mount and grow,
And hath but dwindled down;
My love sought love, and lo!
Hath not attained its crown.—
Say the Saints: 'Fresh souls increase us,
None languish or recede.'
They say: 'We love our Jesus,
And He loves us indeed.'

I cannot rise above,
I cannot rest beneath,
I cannot find out love,
Or escape from death;
Dear hopes and joys gone by
Still mock me with a name;
My best beloved die,
And I cannot die with them.—
Say the Saints: 'No deaths decrease us
Where our rest is glorious.'
They say: 'We live in Jesus
Who once died for us.'

Oh my soul, she beats her wings
And pants to fly away
Up to immortal things
In the heavenly day:
Yet she flags and almost faints:
Can such be meant for me?—
'Come and see,' say the Saints;
Saith Jesus: 'Come and see.'

Say the Saints: 'His pleasures please us
Before God and the Lamb.'
'Come and taste My sweets,' saith Jesus:
'Be with Me where I am.'

1 *February* 1856.

HOW LONG?

My life is long—Not so the Angels say
Who watch me waste it, trembling whilst they weigh
Against eternity my lavished day.

My life is long—Not so the Saints in peace
Judge, filled with plenitude that cannot cease:
Oh life was short which bought such large increase!

My life is long—Christ's word is different:
The heat and burden of the day were spent
On Him,—to me refreshing times are sent.

Give me an Angel's heart, that day nor night
Rests not from adoration its delight,
Still crying 'Holy holy' in the height.

Give me the heart of Saints, who, laid at rest
In better Paradise than Abraham's breast,
In the everlasting Rock have made their nest.

Give me Thy heart, O Christ, who thirty-three
Slow years of sorrow countedst short for me,
That where Thou art there Thy beloved might be.

14 *April* 1856.

AMEN

It is over. What is over?
Nay, now much is over truly!—
Harvest days we toiled to sow for;
Now the sheaves are gathered newly,
Now the wheat is garnered duly.

It is finished. What is finished?
Much is finished known or unknown:
Lives are finished; time diminished;
Was the fallow field left unsown?
Will these buds be always unblown?

It suffices. What suffices?
All suffices reckoned rightly:
Spring shall bloom where now the ice is,
Roses make the bramble sightly,
And the quickening sun shine brightly,
And the latter wind blow lightly,
And my garden teem with spices.

20 *April* 1856.

A MARTYR

It is over the horrible pain,
All is over the struggle and doubt:
She's asleep though her friends stand and weep,
She's asleep while the multitudes shout:
Not to wake to her anguish again,
Not to wake until death is cast out.

Stoop, look at the beautiful face,
See the smile on the satisfied mouth,
The hands crost—she hath conquered not lost:
She hath drunk who was fevered with drouth:
She shall sleep in her safe resting-place
While the hawk spreads her wings toward the South.

She shall sleep while slow seasons are given,
While daylight and darkness go round:
Her heart is at rest in its nest,
Her body at rest in the ground:
She has travelled the long road to heaven,
She sought it and now she has found.

Will you follow the track that she trod,
Will you tread in her footsteps, my friend?
That pathway is rough, but enough
Are the light and the balm that attend.
Do I tread in her steps, O my God,—
Shall I joy with her joy in the end?

23 *April* 1856.

NOW THEY DESIRE

There is a sleep we have not slept,
Safe in a bed unknown:
There hearts are staunched that long have wept
Alone or bled alone:

Sweet sleep that dreams not, or whose dream
Is foretaste of the truth :
Sweet sleep whose sweets are what they seem,
Refreshing more than youth.

There is a sea whose waters clear
Are never tempest-tost :
There is a home whose children dear
Are saved, not one is lost :
There Cherubim and Seraphim
And Angels dwell with Saints,
Whose lustre no more dwindleth dim,
Whose ardour never faints.

There is a Love which fills desire
And can our love requite :
Like fire it draws our lesser fire,
Like greater light our light :
For it we agonize in strife,
We yearn, we famish thus—
Lo in the far-off land of life
Doth it not yearn for us ?

O fair, O fair Jerusalem,
How fair, how far away,
When shall we see thy Jasper-gem
That gives thee light for day ?
Thy sea of glass like fire, thy streets
Of glass like virgin gold,
Thy royal Elders on their seats,
Thy four Beasts manifold ?

Fair City of delights, the Bride
In raiment white and clean,
When shall we see thee loving-eyed,
Sun-girdled, happy Queen ?
Without a wrinkle or a spot,
Blood-cleansed, blood-purchased once :
In how fair ground is fallen the lot
Of all thy happy sons !

Dove's eyes beneath thy parted lock,
A dove's soft voice is thine :
Thy nest is safe within the Rock,
Safe in the very Vine :
Thy walls salvation buildeth them
And all thy gates are praise,
O fair, O fair Jerusalem,
In sevenfold day of days.

13 *August* 1856.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

For my Godchildren.

THE Shepherds had an Angel,
The Wise Men had a star,
But what have I, a little child,
To guide me home from far,
Where glad stars sing together
And singing angels are ?—

Lord Jesus is my Guardian,
So I can nothing lack :
The lambs lie in His bosom
Along life's dangerous track :
The wilful lambs that go astray
He bleeding fetches back.

Lord Jesus is my guiding star,
My beacon-light in heaven :
He leads me step by step along
The path of life uneven :
He, true light, leads me to that land
Whose day shall be as seven.

Those Shepherds through the lonely night
Sat watching by their sheep,
Until they saw the heavenly host
Who neither tire nor sleep,
All singing 'Glory glory'
In festival they keep.

Christ watches me, His little lamb,
Cares for me day and night,
That I may be His own in heaven:
So angels clad in white
Shall sing their 'Glory glory'
For my sake in the height.

The Wise Men left their country
To journey morn by morn,
With gold and frankincense and myrrh,
Because the Lord was born:
God sent a star to guide them
And sent a dream to warn.

My life is like their journey,
Their star is like God's book;
I must be like those good Wise Men
With heavenward heart and look:
But shall I give no gifts to God?—
What precious gifts they took!

Lord, I will give my love to Thee,
Than gold much costlier,
Sweeter to Thee than frankincense,
More prized than choicest myrrh:
Lord, make me dearer day by day,
Day by day holier;

Nearer and dearer day by day:
Till I my voice unite,
And sing my 'Glory glory'
With angels clad in white;
All 'Glory glory' given to Thee
Through all the heavenly height.

6 *October* 1856.

NOT YOURS BUT YOU

'He died for me: what can I offer Him?
Toward Him swells incense of perpetual prayer:
His court wear crowns and aureoles round their hair:
His ministers are subtle Cherubim;
Ring within ring, white intense Seraphim
Leap like immortal lightnings through the air.
What shall I offer Him? defiled and bare,
My spirit broken and my brightness dim.'—
'Give Me thy youth.'—'I yield it to Thy rod,
As Thou didst yield Thy prime of youth for me.'—
'Give Me thy life.'—'I give it breath by breath;
As Thou didst give Thy life so give I Thee.'—
'Give Me thy love.'—'So be it, my God, my God,
As Thou hast loved me even to bitter death.'

27 *October* 1856.

AFTER THIS THE JUDGMENT

As eager homebound traveller to the goal,
Or steadfast seeker on an unsearched main,
Or martyr panting for an aureole,
My fellow-pilgrims pass me, and attain
That hidden mansion of perpetual peace
Where keen desire and hope dwell free from pain.
That gate stands open of perennial ease;
I view the glory till I partly long,
Yet lack the fire of love which quickens these.

O passing Angel, speed me with a song,
A melody of heaven to reach my heart
And rouse me to the race and make me strong;
Till in such music I take up my part
Swelling those Hallelujahs full of rest,
One, tenfold, hundredfold, with heavenly art,
Fulfilling north and south and east and west,
Thousand, ten thousandfold, innumerable,
All blent in one yet each one manifest;
Each one distinguished and beloved as well
As if no second voice in earth or heaven
Were lifted up the Love of God to tell.
Ah Love of God, which thine own Self hast given
To me most poor, and made me rich in love,
Love that dost pass the tenfold seven times seven,
Draw Thou mine eyes, draw Thou my heart above,
My treasure and my heart store Thou in Thee;
Brood over me with yearnings of a dove;
Be Husband, Brother, closest Friend to me;
Love me as very mother loves her son,
Her sucking firstborn fondled on her knee:
Yea, more than mother loves her little one;
For, earthly, even a mother may forget
And feel no pity for its piteous moan.
But thou, O Love of God, remember yet,
Through the dry desert, through the waterflood
(Life, death), until the Great White Throne is set.
If now I am sick in chewing the bitter cud
Of sweet past sin, though solaced by Thy grace
And ofttimes strengthened by Thy Flesh and Blood,
How shall I then stand up before Thy face
When from Thine eyes repentance shall be hid
And utmost Justice stand in Mercy's place?
When every sin I thought or spoke or did
Shall meet me at the inexorable bar,
And there be no man standing in the mid
To plead for me; while star fallen after star
With heaven and earth are like a ripened shock,
And all time's mighty works and wonders are
Consumed as in a moment; when no rock
Remains to fall on me, no tree to hide,
But I stand all creation's gazing-stock,
Exposed and comfortless on every side,
Placed trembling in the final balances
Whose poise this hour, this moment, must be tried.—

Ah Love of God, if greater love than this
Hath no man, that a man die for his friend,
And if such love of love Thine own Love is,
Plead with Thyself, with me, before the end;
Redeem me from the irrevocable past;
Pitch Thou Thy Presence round me to defend;
Yea seek with pierced feet, yea hold me fast
With pierced hands whose wounds were made by love.
Not what I am, remember what Thou wast
When darkness hid from Thee Thy heavens above,
And sin Thy Father's Face, while Thou didst drink
The bitter cup of death, didst taste thereof
For every man; while Thou wast nigh to sink
Beneath the intense intolerable rod,
Grown sick of love; not what I am, but think
Thy Life then ransomed mine, my God, my God!

12 *December* 1856.

OLD AND NEW YEAR DITTIES

1

New Year met me somewhat sad:
Old Year leaves me tired,
Stripped of favourite things I had,
Baulked of much desired:
Yet farther on my road to-day,
God willing, farther on my way.

New Year coming on apace,
What have you to give me?
Bring you scathe or bring you grace,
Face me with an honest face,
You shall not deceive me:
Be it good or ill, be it what you will,
It needs shall help me on my road,
My rugged way to heaven, please God.

13 *December* 1856.

2

Watch with me, men, women, and children dear,
You whom I love, for whom I hope and fear,
Watch with me this last vigil of the year.
Some hug their business, some their pleasure scheme;
Some seize the vacant hour to sleep or dream;
Heart locked in heart some kneel and watch apart.

Watch with me, blessed spirits, who delight
All through the holy night to walk in white,
Or take your ease after the long-drawn fight.
I know not if they watch with me: I know
They count this eve of resurrection slow,
And cry 'How long?' with urgent utterance strong.

Watch with me, Jesus, in my loneliness:
Though others say me nay, yet say Thou yes;
Though others pass me by, stop Thou to bless.

Yea, Thou dost stop with me this vigil night;
To-night of pain, to-morrow of delight:
I Love, am Thine; Thou, Lord my God, art mine.

31 *December* 1858.

3

Passing away, saith the World, passing away:
Chances, beauty, and youth, sapped day by day:
Thy life never continueth in one stay.
Is the eye waxen dim, is the dark hair changing to grey
That hath won neither laurel nor bay?
I shall clothe myself in Spring and bud in May:
Thou, root-stricken, shalt not rebuild thy decay
On my bosom for aye.
Then I answered: Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away:
With its burden of fear and hope, of labour and play,
Hearken what the past doth witness and say:
Rose in thy gold, a moth is in thine array,
A canker is in thy bud, thy leaf must decay.
At midnight, at cockcrow, at morning, one certain day
Lo the Bridegroom shall come and shall not delay;
Watch and pray.
Then I answered: Yea.

Passing away, saith my God, passing away:
Winter passeth after the long delay:
New grapes on the vine, new figs on the tender spray,
Turtle calleth turtle in Heaven's May.
Though I tarry, wait for Me, trust Me, watch and pray:
Arise, come away, night is past and lo it is day,
My love, My sister, My spouse, thou shalt hear Me say.
Then I answered: Yea.

31 *December* 1858.

A BETTER RESURRECTION

I have no wit, no words, no tears;
My heart within me like a stone
Is numbed too much for hopes or fears.
Look right, look left, I dwell alone;
I lift mine eyes, but dimmed with grief
No everlasting hills I see;
My life is in the falling leaf:
O Jesus, quicken me.

My life is like a faded leaf,
My harvest dwindled to a husk:
Truly my life is void and brief
And tedious in the barren dusk;
My life is like a frozen thing,
No bud nor greenness can I see:
Yet rise it shall—the sap of Spring;
O Jesus, rise in me.

My life is like a broken bowl,
A broken bowl that cannot hold
One drop of water for my soul
Or cordial in the searching cold;

Cast in the fire the perished thing ;
Melt and remould it, till it be
A royal cup for Him, my King :
O Jesus, drink of me.

30 *June* 1857.

THE HEART KNOWETH ITS OWN BITTERNESS

When all the over-work of life
Is finished once, and fast asleep
We swerve no more beneath the knife
But taste that silence cool and deep ;
Forgetful of the highways rough,
Forgetful of the thorny scourge,
Forgetful of the tossing surge,
Then shall we find it is enough ?

How can we say 'enough' on earth—
'Enough' with such a craving heart ?
I have not found it since my birth,
But still have bartered part for part.
I have not held and hugged the whole,
But paid the old to gain the new :
Much have I paid, yet much is due,
Till I am beggared sense and soul.

I used to labour, used to strive
For pleasure with a restless will :
Now if I save my soul alive
All else what matters, good or ill ?
I used to dream alone, to plan
Unspoken hopes and days to come :
Of all my past this is the sum
I will not lean on child of man.

To give, to give, not to receive !
I long to pour myself, my soul,
Not to keep back or count or leave,
But king with king to give the whole.
I long for one to stir my deep—
I have had enough of help and gift—
I long for one to search and sift
Myself, to take myself and keep.

You scratch my surface with your pin,
You stroke me smooth with hushing breath :—
Nay pierce, nay probe, nay dig within,
Probe my quick core and sound my depth.
You call me with a puny call,
You talk, you smile, you nothing do :
How should I spend my heart on you,
My heart that so outweighs you all ?

Your vessels are by much too strait :
Were I to pour, you could not hold.
Bear with me : I must bear to wait,
A fountain sealed through heat and cold.
Bear with me days or months or years :
Deep must call deep until the end
When friend shall no more envy friend
Nor vex his friend at unawares.

Not in this world of hope deferred,
This world of perishable stuff :—

Eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard
Nor heart conceived that full 'enough':
Here moans the separating sea,
Here harvests fail, here breaks the heart:
There God shall join and no man part,
I full of Christ and Christ of me.
27 August 1857.

DIVERS WORLDS. TIME AND ETERNITY

(*From 27 August* 1857 *to before* 1893.)

EARTH has clear call of daily bells,
A chancel-vault of gloom and star,
A rapture where the anthems are,
A thunder when the organ swells:
Alas, man's daily life—what else?—
Is out of tune with daily bells.

While Paradise accords the chimes
Of Earth and Heaven, its patient pause
Is rest fulfilling music's laws.
Saints sit and gaze, where oftentimes
Precursive flush of morning climbs
And air vibrates with coming chimes.
6 August 1858.

Escape to the Mountain.

I PEERED within, and saw a world of sin;
Upward, and saw a world of righteousness;
Downward, and saw darkness and flame begin
Which no man can express.

I girt me up, I gat me up to flee
From face of darkness and devouring flame:
And fled I had, but guilt is loading me
With dust of death and shame.

Yet still the light of righteousness beams pure,
Beams to me from the world of far-off day:
Lord, Who hast called them happy that endure,
Lord, make me such as they.
Before 1893.

I LIFT mine eyes to see: earth vanisheth.
I lift up wistful eyes and bend my knee:
Trembling, bowed down, and face to face with Death,
I lift mine eyes to see.

Lo what I see is Death that shadows me:
Yet whilst I, seeing, draw a shuddering breath,
Death like a mist grows rare perceptibly.

Beyond the darkness light, beyond the scathe
Healing, beyond the Cross a palm-branch tree,
Beyond Death Life, on evidence of faith:
I lift mine eyes to see.
Before 1893.

Yet a little while.

HEAVEN is not far, tho' far the sky
Overarching earth and main.
It takes not long to live and die,
Die, revive, and rise again.

Not long: how long? Oh long re-
echoing song!
O Lord, how long?
Before 1893.

Behold, it was very good.

ALL things are fair, if we had eyes
to see
How first God made them goodly
everywhere:
And goodly still in Paradise they
be,—
All things are fair.

O Lord, the solemn heavens Thy
praise declare;
The multi-fashioned saints bring
praise to Thee,
As doves fly home and cast away
their care.

As doves on divers branches of their
tree,
Perched high or low, sit all con-
tented there,
Not mourning any more; in each
degree
All things are fair.
Before 1893.

Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive.

WHEN all the overwork of life
Is finished once, and fallen asleep
We shrink no more beneath the knife,
But having sown prepare to reap;
Delivered from the crossway rough,
Delivered from the thorny scourge,
Delivered from the tossing surge,
Then shall we find—(please God!)
—it is enough?

Not in this world of hope deferred,
This world of perishable stuff;
Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath
heard,
Nor heart conceived that full
'enough';
Here moans the separating sea,
Here harvests fail, here breaks the
heart;
There God shall join and no man
part,
All one in Christ, so one—(please
God!)—with me.
27 *August* 1857.

THIS near-at-hand land breeds pain
by measure:
That far-away land overflows with
treasure
Of heaped-up good pleasure.

Our land that we see is befouled by
evil:
The land that we see not makes
mirth and revel,
Far from death and devil.

This land hath for music sobbing and
sighing:
That land hath soft speech and sweet
soft replying
Of all loves undying.

This land hath for pastime errors and
follies:
That land hath unending unflagging
solace
Of full-chanted 'Holies.'

'Up and away,' call the Angels to
us;
'Come to our home where no foe can
pursue us,
And no tears bedew us;

'Where that which riseth sets again never,
Where that which springeth flows in a river
For ever and ever;

'Where harvest justifies labour of sowing,
Where that which budded comes to the blowing,
Sweet beyond your knowing.

'Come and laugh with us, sing in our singing;
Come, yearn no more, but rest in your clinging.
See what we are bringing;

'Crowns like our own crowns, robes for your wearing;
For love of you we kiss them in bearing,
All good with you sharing:

'Over you gladdening, in you delighting;
Come from your famine, your failure, your fighting;
Come to full wrong-righting.

'Come, where all balm is garnered to ease you;
Come, where all beauty is spread out to please you;
Come, gaze upon Jesu.'

Circa 1877.

'Was Thy Wrath against the Sea?'

THE sea laments with unappeasable
Hankering wail of loss,
Lifting its hands on high and passing by
Out of the lovely light:
No foambow any more may crest that swell
Of clamorous waves which toss;
Lifting its hands on high it passes by
From light into the night.
Peace, peace, thou sea! God's wisdom worketh well,
Assigns it crown or cross:
Lift we all hands on high, and passing by
Attest—God doeth right.

Before 1893.

And there was no more Sea.

VOICES from above and from beneath,
Voices of creation near and far,
Voices out of life and out of death,
Out of measureless space,
Sun, moon, star,
In oneness of contentment offering praise.

Heaven and earth and sea jubilant,
Jubilant all things that dwell therein;
Filled to fullest overflow they chant,
Still roll onward, swell,
Still begin
Never flagging praise interminable.

Thou who must fall silent in a while,
Chant thy sweetest, gladdest, best, at once;
Sun thyself to-day, keep peace and smile;
By love upward send
Orisons,
Accounting love thy lot and love thine end.

Before 1893.

ROSES on a brier,
Pearls from out the bitter sea,
Such is earth's desire
However pure it be.

Neither bud nor brier,
Neither pearl nor brine for me:
Be stilled, my long desire;
There shall be no more sea.

Be stilled, my passionate heart;
Old earth shall end, new earth shall be:
Be still, and earn thy part
Where shall be no more sea.

Before 1886.

WE are of those who tremble at Thy word;
Who faltering walk in darkness toward our close
Of mortal life, by terrors curbed and spurred;
We are of those.

We journey to that land which no man knows
Who any more can make his voice be heard
Above the clamour of our wants and woes.

Not ours the hearts Thy loftiest love hath stirred,
Not such as we Thy lily and Thy rose:
Yet, Hope of those who hope with hope deferred,
We are of those.

Before 1893.

Awake thou that sleepest.

THE night is far spent, the day is at hand:
Let us therefore cast off the works of darkness,
And let us put on the armour of light.
Night for the dead in their stiffness and starkness!
Day for the living who mount in their might
Out of their graves to the beautiful land.

Far, far away lies the beautiful land:
Mount on wide wings of exceeding desire,
Mount, look not back, mount to life and to light,
Mount by the gleam of your lamps all on fire
Up from the dead men and up from the night.
The night is far spent, the day is at hand.

Before 1893.

WE know not when, we know not where,
We know not what that world will be;
But this we know—it will be fair
To see.

With heart athirst and thirsty face
We know and know not what shall be:
Christ Jesus bring us of His grace
To see.

Christ Jesus bring us of His grace,
Beyond all prayers our hope can pray,
One day to see Him face to Face,
One day.

Before 1886.

I will lift up mine eyes unto the Hills.

WHEN sick of life and all the world—
How sick of all desire but Thee!—
I lift mine eyes up to the hills,
Eyes of my heart that see,
I see beyond all death and ills
Refreshing green for heart and eyes,
The golden streets and gateways pearled,
The trees of Paradise.

'There is a time for all things,' saith
The Word of Truth, Thyself the Word:
And many things Thou reasonest of:
A time for hope deferred,
But time is now for grief and fears;
A time for life, but now is death;
Oh when shall be the time of love
When Thou shalt wipe our tears?

Then the new Heavens and Earth shall be
Where righteousness shall dwell indeed;
There shall be no more blight, nor need,
Nor barrier of the sea;
No sun and moon alternating,
For God shall be the Light thereof;
No sorrow more, no death, no sting,
For God Who reigns is Love.

Before 1886.

Then whose shall those things be?

OH what is earth, that we should build
Our houses here, and seek concealed
Poor treasure, and add field to field,
And heap to heap and store to store,
Still grasping more and seeking more,
While step by step Death nears the door?

16 *July* 1858.

His Banner over me was Love.

IN that world we weary to attain,
Love's furled banner floats at large unfurled:
There is no more doubt and no more pain
In that world.

There are gems and gold and inlets pearled;
There the verdure fadeth not again;
There no clinging tendrils droop uncurled.

Here incessant tides stir up the main,
Stormy miry depths aloft are hurled:
There is no more sea, or storm, or stain,
In that world.

Before 1886.

BELOVED, yield thy time to God, for He
Will make eternity thy recompense;
Give all thy substance for His Love, and be
Beatified past earth's experience.

Serve Him in bonds, until He set thee free;
Serve Him in dust, until He lift thee thence;
Till death be swallowed up in victory
When the great trumpet sounds to bid thee hence.
Shall setting day win day that will not set?
Poor price wert thou to spend thyself for Christ,
Had not His wealth thy poverty sufficed:
Yet since He makes His garden of thy clod,
Water thy lily, rose, or violet,
And offer up thy sweetness unto God.

Before 1893.

TIME seems not short:
If so I call to mind
Its vast prerogative to loose or bind,
And bear and strike amort
All humankind.

Time seems not long:
If I peer out and see
Sphere within sphere, time in eternity,
And hear the alternate song
Cry endlessly.

Time greatly short,
O time so briefly long,
Yea, time sole battle-ground of right and wrong:
Art thou a time for sport
And for a song?

Before 1893.

THE half moon shows a face of plaintive sweetness
Ready and poised to wax or wane;
A fire of pale desire in incompleteness,
Tending to pleasure or to pain:—
Lo while we gaze she rolleth on in fleetness
To perfect loss or perfect gain.

Half bitterness we know, we know half sweetness;
This world is all on wax, on wane:
When shall completeness round time's incompleteness,
Fulfilling joy, fulfilling pain?
Lo, while we ask, life rolleth on in fleetness
To finished loss or finished gain.

Before 1893.

'As the Doves to their windows.'

THEY throng from the east and the west,
The north and the south, with a song;
To golden abodes of their rest
They throng.

Eternity stretches out long:
Time, brief at its worst or its best,
Will quit them of ruin and wrong.

A rainbow aloft for their crest,
A palm for their weakness made strong:
As doves breast all winds to their nest,
They throng.

Before 1893.

OH knell of a passing time,
Will it never cease to chime ?
Oh stir of the tedious sea,
Will it never cease to be ?
Yea, when night and when day,
Moon and sun, pass away.

Surely the sun burns low,
The moon makes ready to go,
Broad ocean ripples to waste,
Time is running in haste,
Night is numbered, and day
Numbered to pass away.

Before 1893.

TIME passeth away with its pleasure
and pain,
Its garlands of cypress and bay,
With wealth and with want, with a
balm and a bane,
Time passeth away.

Eternity cometh to stay,
Eternity stayeth to go not again ;
Eternity barring the way,

Arresting all courses of planet or
main,
Arresting who plan or who pray,
Arresting creation : while grand in
its wane
Time passeth away.

Before 1893.

The Earth shall tremble at the Look
of Him.

TREMBLE, thou earth, at the Presence
of the Lord
Whose Will conceived thee and
brought thee to the birth,
Always, everywhere, thy Lord to be
adored :
Tremble, thou earth.

Wilt thou laugh time away in
music and mirth ?
Time hath days of pestilence, hath
days of a sword,
Hath days of hunger and thirst in
desolate dearth.

Till eternity wake up the multichord
Thrilled harp of heaven, and
breathe full its organ's girth
For joy of heaven and infinite
reward,
Tremble, thou earth.

Before 1893.

TIME lengthening, in the lengthening
seemeth long :
But ended Time will seem a little
space,
A little while from morn to evensong,
A little while that ran a rapid race ;
A little while, when once Eternity
Denies proportion to the other's
pace.
Eternity to be and be and be,
Ever beginning, never ending
still,
Still undiminished far as thought can
see ;
Farther than thought can see, by
dint of will
Strung up and strained and shooting
like a star
Past utmost bound of everlasting
hill :
Eternity unswaddled, without bar,
Finishing sequence in its awful
sum ;
Eternity still rolling forth its car,
Eternity still here and still to
come.

Before 1893.

All flesh is Grass.

So brief a life, and then an endless life
Or endless death;
So brief a life, then endless peace or strife:
Whoso considereth
How man but like a flower
Or shoot of grass
Blooms an hour,
Well may sigh 'Alas!'

So brief a life, and then an endless grief
Or endless joy;
So brief a life, then ruin or relief:
What solace, what annoy
Of Time needs dwelling on?
It is, it was,
It is done,
While we sigh 'Alas!'

Yet saints are singing in a happy hope
Forecasting pleasure,
Bright eyes of faith enlarging all their scope;
Saints love beyond Time's measure:
Where love is, there is bliss
That will not pass;
Where love is,
Dies away 'Alas!'

Before 1893.

HEAVEN'S chimes are slow, but sure to strike at last:
Earth's sands are slow, but surely dropping thro':
And much we have to suffer, much to do,
Before the time be past.

Chimes that keep time are neither slow nor fast:
Not many are the numbered sands nor few:
A time to suffer, and a time to do
And then the time is past.

Before 1886.

There remaineth therefore a Rest to the People of God.

REST remains when all is done,
Work and vigil, prayer and fast,
All fulfilled from first to last,
All the length of time gone past
And eternity begun.

Fear and hope and chastening rod
Urge us on the narrow way:
Bear we now as best we may
Heat and burden of to-day,
Struggling, panting up to God.

Before 1886.

PARTING after parting,
Sore loss and gnawing pain:
Meeting grows half a sorrow
Because of parting again.
When shall the day break
That these things shall not be?
When shall new earth be ours
Without a sea,
And time that is not time
But eternity?

To meet, worth living for;
Worth dying for, to meet;
To meet, worth parting for,
Bitter forgot in sweet:
To meet, worth parting before,
Never to part more.

June 1858 *and June* 1864.

They put their trust in Thee, and were not confounded.

I.

TOGETHER once, but never more
While Time and Death run out their runs :
Tho' sundered now as shore from shore,
Together once.

Nor rising suns, nor setting suns,
Nor life renewed which springtide bore,
Make one again Death's sundered ones.

Eternity holds rest in store,
Holds hope of long reunions :
But holds it what they hungered for
Together once ?

II.

Whatso it be, howso it be, Amen.
Blessed it is, believing, not to see.
Now God knows all that is ; and we shall, then,
Whatso it be.

God's Will is best for man whose will is free.
God's Will is better to us, yea, than ten
Desires whereof He holds and weighs the key.

Amid her household cares He guides the wren,
He guards the shifty mouse from poverty ;
He knows all wants, allots each where and when,
Whatso it be.

Before 1886.

SHORT is time, and only time is bleak ;
Gauge the exceeding height thou hast to climb :
Long eternity is nigh to seek :
Short is time.

Time is shortening with the wintry rime :
Pray and watch and pray, girt up and meek ;
Praying, watching, praying, chime by chime.

Pray by silence if thou canst not speak :
Time is shortening ; pray on till the prime :
Time is shortening ; soul, fulfil thy week :
Short is time.

Before 1893.

For Each.

MY harvest is done, its promise is ended,
Weak and watery sets the sun,
Day and night in one mist are blended,
My harvest is done.

Long while running, how short when run,
Time to eternity has descended,
Timeless eternity has begun.

Was it the narrow way that I wended ?
Snares and pits was it mine to shun ?
The scythe has fallen, so long sus pended,
My harvest is done.

Before 1893.

For All.

Man's harvest is past, his summer is ended,
Hope and fear are finished at last,
Day hath descended, night hath ascended.
Man's harvest is past.

Time is fled that fleeted so fast:
All the unmended remains unmended,
The perfect, perfect: all lots are cast.

Waiting till earth and ocean be rended,
Waiting for call of the trumpet blast,
Each soul at goal of that way it wended,—
Man's harvest is past.

Before 1893.

ADVENT

THIS Advent moon shines cold and clear,
These Advent nights are long;
Our lamps have burned year after year
And still their flame is strong.
'Watchman, what of the night?' we cry,
Heart-sick with hope deferred:
'No speaking signs are in the sky,'
Is still the watchman's word.

The Porter watches at the gate,
The servants watch within;
The watch is long betimes and late,
The prize is slow to win.
'Watchman, what of the night?'
But still
His answer sounds the same:
'No daybreak tops the utmost hill,
Nor pale our lamps of flame.'

One to another hear them speak
The patient virgins wise:
'Surely He is not far to seek'—
'All night we watch and rise.'
'The days are evil looking back,
The coming days are dim;
Yet count we not His promise slack,
But watch and wait for Him.'

One with another, soul with soul,
They kindle fire from fire:
'Friends watch us who have touched the goal.'
'They urge us, come up higher.'
'With them shall rest our waysore feet,
With them is built our home,
With Christ.'—'They sweet, but He most sweet,
Sweeter than honeycomb.'

There no more parting, no more pain,
The distant ones brought near,
The lost so long are found again,
Long lost but longer dear:
Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard,
Nor heart conceived that rest,
With them our good things long deferred,
With Jesus Christ our Best.

We weep because the night is long,
We laugh for day shall rise,
We sing a slow contented song
And knock at Paradise.
Weeping we hold Him fast Who wept
For us, we hold Him fast;
And will not let Him go except
He bless us first or last.

Weeping we hold Him fast to-night;
We will not let Him go
Till daybreak smite our wearied sight
And summer smite the snow:
Then figs shall bud, and dove with dove
Shall coo the livelong day;
Then He shall say, 'Arise, My love,
My fair one, come away.'

2 *May* 1858.

CHRISTIAN AND JEW

A DIALOGUE

'Oh happy happy land!
Angels like rushes stand
About the wells of light.'—
'Alas, I have not eyes for this fair sight:
Hold fast my hand.'—

'As in a soft wind, they
Bend all one blessed way,
Each bowed in his own glory, star with star.'—
'I cannot see so far;
Here shadows are.'—

'White-winged the cherubim,
Yet whiter seraphim,
Glow white with intense fire of love.'—
'Mine eyes are dim:
I look in vain above,
And miss their hymn.'—

'Angels, Archangels cry
One to other ceaselessly
(I hear them sing)
One "Holy, Holy, Holy" to their King.'—
'I do not hear them, I.'—

'Joy to thee, Paradise,
Garden and goal and nest!
Made green for wearied eyes;
Much softer than the breast
Of mother-dove clad in a rainbow's dyes.

'All precious souls are there
Most safe, elect by grace,
All tears are wiped for ever from their face:
Untired in prayer
They wait and praise
Hidden for a little space.

'Boughs of the Living Vine,
They spread in summer shine
Green leaf with leaf:
Sap of the Royal Vine, it stirs like wine
In all both less and chief.

'Sing to the Lord,
All spirits of all flesh, sing;
For He hath not abhorred
Our low estate nor scorned our offering:
Shout to our King.'—

'But Zion said:
My Lord forgetteth me.
Lo she hath made her bed
In dust; forsaken weepeth she
Where alien rivers swell the sea.

'She laid her body as the ground,
Her tender body as the ground to those
Who passed; her harpstrings cannot sound
In a strange land; discrowned
She sits, and drunk with woes.'—

'O drunken not with wine,
Whose sins and sorrows have fulfilled the sum,—
Be not afraid, arise, be no more dumb;
Arise, shine,
For thy light is come.'—

'Can these bones live?'—
'God knows:
The prophet saw such clothed with flesh and skin;
A wind blew on them, and life entered in;
They shook and rose.
Hasten the time, O Lord, blot out their sin,
Let life begin.'

9 *July* 1858.

A BURDEN

They lie at rest asleep and dead,
The dew is cool above their head,
They knew not when past summer fled— *Amen.*

They lie at rest and quite forget
The hopes and fears that wring us yet:
Their eyes are set, their heart is set— *Amen.*

They lie with us, yet gone away
Hear nothing that we sob or say
Beneath the thorn of wintry May—
Miserere.

They lie asleep with us, and take
Sweet rest although our heart should ache,
Rest on although our heart should break— *Miserere.*

Together all yet each alone,
Each laid at rest beneath his own
Smooth turf or white appointed stone— *Amen.*

When shall our slumbers be so deep,
And bleeding heart and eyes that weep
Lie lapped in the sufficient sleep?—
Miserere.

We dream of them, and who shall say
They never dream while far away
Of us between the night and day?—
Sursum Corda.

Gone far away: or it may be
They lean toward us and hear and see,
Yea and remember more than we—
Amen.

For wherefore should we think them far
Who know not where those spirits are
That shall be glorious as a star?—
Hallelujah.

Where chill or change can never rise,
Deep in the depth of Paradise
They rest world-wearied heart and eyes— *Jubilate.*

Safe as a hidden brooding dove,
With perfect peace within, above,
They love, and look for perfect love— *Hallelujah.*

We hope and love with throbbing breast,
They hope and love and are at rest:
And yet we question which is best
Miserere.

Oh what is earth, that we should
build
Our houses here, and seek concealed
Poor treasure, and add field to field

And heap to heap and store to store,
Still grasping more and seeking more
While Death stands knocking at the
door?— *Cui bono?*

But one will answer: Changed and
pale
And sick at heart, I thirst, I fail
For love, I thirst without avail—
Miserrima.

Sweet love, a fountain sealed to me:
Sweet love, the one sufficiency
For all the longings that can be—
Amen.

Oh happy they alone whose lot
Is love! I search from spot to spot:
In life, in death, I find it not—
Miserrima.

Not found in life: nay verily.
I too have sought: come sit with
me,
And grief for grief shall answer
thee— *Miserrima.*

Sit with me where the sapless leaves
Are heaped and sere: to him who
grieves
What cheer have last year's harvest-
sheaves?— *Cui bono?*

Not found in life, yet found in death.
Hush, throbbing heart and sobbing
breath!
There is a nest of love beneath
The sod, a home prepared before:
Our brethren whom one mother bore
Live there, and toil and ache no
more— *Hallelujah.*

Our friends, our kinsfolk, great and
small,
Our loved, our best beloved of all,
They watch across the parting wall

(Do they not watch?) and count the
creep
Of time, and sound the shallowing
deep,
Till we in port shall also sleep—
Hallelujah, Amen.

16 *July* 1858.

ONLY BELIEVE

I STOOD by weeping
Yet a sorrowful silence keeping
While an Angel smote my love
As she lay sleeping.

'Is there a bed above
More fragrant than these violets
That are white like death?'

'White like a dove,
Flowers in the blessed islets
Breathe sweeter breath
All fair morns and twilights.'

'Is the gold there
More golden than these tresses?'

'There heads are aureoled
And crowned like gold
With light most rare.'

'Are the bowers of Heaven
More choice than these?'

'To them are given
All odorous shady trees.
Earth's bowers are wildernesses,
Compared with the recesses
Made soft there now
Nest-like twixt bough and bough.'

'Who shall live in such a nest?'

'Heart with heart at rest:
All they whose troubles cease
In peace:
Souls that wrestled
Now are nestled
There at ease,—
Throng from east and west,
From north and south,
To plenty from the land of drouth.'

September 1858.

NEW JERUSALEM AND ITS CITIZENS

(*From September* 1858 *to before* 1893.)

The Holy City, New Jerusalem.

JERUSALEM is built of gold,
Of crystal, pearl, and gem:
Oh fair thy lustres manifold,
Thou fair Jerusalem!
Thy citizens who walk in white
Have nought to do with day or night,
And drink the river of delight.

Jerusalem makes melody
For simple joy of heart;
An organ of full compass she,
One-tuned thro' every part:
While not to day or night belong
Her matins and her evensong,
The one thanksgiving of her throng.

Jerusalem a garden is,
A garden of delight;
Leaf, flower, and fruit, make fair her trees,
Which see not day or night:
Beside her River clear and calm
The Tree of Life grows with the Palm,
For triumph and for food and balm.

Jerusalem, where song nor gem
Nor fruit nor waters cease,
God bring us to Jerusalem,
God bring us home in peace;
The strong who stand, the weak who fall,
The first and last, the great and small,
Home one by one, home one and all.

Circa 1877.

WHEN wickedness is broken as a tree
Paradise comes to light, ah holy land!
Whence death has vanished like a shifting sand,
And barrenness is banished with the sea.
Its bulwarks are salvation fully manned,
All gems it hath for glad variety,
And pearls for pureness radiant glimmeringly,
And gold for grandeur where all good is grand.
An inner ring of saints meets linked above,
And linked of angels is an outer ring;
For voice of waters or for thunders' voice

Lo harps and songs wherewith all saints rejoice,
And all the trembling there of any string
Is but a trembling of enraptured love.
Before 1893.

JERUSALEM of fire
And gold and pearl and gem,
Saints flock to fill thy choir,
Jerusalem.

Lo, thrones thou hast for them ;
Desirous they desire
Thy harp, thy diadem,

Thy bridal white attire,
A palm-branch from thy stem :
Thy holiness their hire,
Jerusalem.
Before 1893.

She shall be brought unto the King.

THE King's Daughter is all glorious within,
Her clothing of wrought gold sets forth her bliss ;
Where the endless choruses of heaven begin
The King's Daughter is ;

Perfect her notes in the perfect harmonies ;
With tears wiped away, no conscience of sin,
Loss forgotten and sorrowful memories ;

Alight with Cherubin, afire with Seraphin,
Lily for pureness, rose for charities,
With joy won and with joy evermore to win,
The King's Daughter is.
Before 1893.

WHO is this that cometh up not alone
From the fiery-flying-serpent wilderness,
Leaning upon her own Beloved One ?
Who is this ?

Lo, the King of kings' daughter, a high princess,
Going home as bride to her Husband's Throne,
Virgin queen in perfected loveliness.

Her eyes a dove's eyes and her voice a dove's moan,
She shows like a full moon for heavenliness :
Eager saints and angels ask in heaven's zone,
Who is this ?
Before 1886.

WHO sits with the King in His Throne ? Not a slave but a Bride,
With this King of all Greatness and Grace Who reigns not alone ;
His Glory her glory, where glorious she glows at His side
Who sits with the King in His Throne.

She came from dim uttermost depths which no Angel hath known,

Leviathan's whirlpool and Dragon's
dominion worldwide,
From the frost or the fire to
Paradisiacal zone.

Lo, she is fair as a dove, silvery,
golden, dove-eyed :
Lo, Dragon laments and Death
laments, for their prey is
flown :
She dwells in the Vision of Peace,
and her peace shall abide
Who sits with the King in His
Throne.

Before 1893.

Antipas.

HIDDEN from the darkness of our
mortal sight,
Hidden in the Paradise of lovely
light,
Hidden in God's Presence, wor-
shipped face to face,
Hidden in the sanctuary of Christ's
embrace.
Up, O Wills ! to track him home
among the blest ;
Up, O Hearts ! to know him in the
joy of rest ;
Where no darkness more shall hide
him from our sight,
Where we shall be love with love,
and light with light,
Worshiping our God together face
to face,
Wishless in the sanctuary of Christ's
embrace.

Before 1893.

'Beautiful for situation.'

A LOVELY city in a lovely land,
Whose citizens are lovely, and
whose King
Is Very Love ; to Whom all
Angels sing ;
To Whom all saints sing crowned,
their sacred band
Saluting Love with palm-branch in
their hand :
Thither all doves on gold or silver
wing
Flock home thro' agate windows
glistering
Set wide, and where pearl gates
wide open stand.
A bower of roses is not half so sweet,
A cave of diamonds doth not
glitter so,
Nor Lebanon is fruitful set
thereby :
And thither thou, beloved, and
thither I
May set our heart and set our
face and go,
Faint yet pursuing, home on tireless
feet.

Before 1893

LORD, by what inconceivable dim
road
Thou leadest man on footsore
pilgrimage !
Weariness is his rest from stage
to stage,
Brief halting-places are his sole
abode.
Onward he fares thro' rivers over-
flowed,
Thro' deserts where all doleful
creatures rage ;
Onward from year to year, from
age to age,
He groans and totters onward with
his load.
Behold how inconceivable his way ;
How tenfold inconceivable the
goal,

His goal of hope deferred, his promised peace :
Yea, but behold him sitting down at ease,
Refreshed in body and refreshed in soul,
At rest from labour on the Sabbath Day,

Before 1893.

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

' GOLDEN-HAIRED, lily-white,
Will you pluck me lilies ?
Or will you show me where they grow,
Show where the limpid rill is ?
But is your hair of gold or light,
And is your foot of flake or fire,
And have you wings rolled up from sight
And songs to slake desire ? '

' I pluck fresh flowers of Paradise,
Lilies and roses red,
A bending sceptre for my hand,
A crown to crown my head.
I sing my songs, I pluck my flowers
Sweet-scented from their fragrant trees ;
I sing, we sing, amid the bowers,
And gather palm-branches.'

' Is there a path to Heaven
My stumbling foot may tread ?
And will you show that way to go,
That bower and blossom bed ? '
' The path to Heaven is steep and straight
And scorched, but ends in shade of trees,
Where yet a while we sing and wait
And gather palm-branches.'

Before 1886.

CAST down but not destroyed, chastened not slain :
Thy Saints have lived that life, but how can I ?
I, who thro' dread of death do daily die
By daily foretaste of an unfelt pain.
Lo I depart who shall not come again ;
Lo as a shadow I am flitting by ;
As a leaf trembling, as a wheel I fly,
While death flies faster and my flight is vain.
Chastened not slain, cast down but not destroyed :—
If thus Thy Saints have struggled home to peace,
Why should not I take heart to be as they ?
They too pent passions in a house of clay,
Fear and desire, and pangs and ecstasies ;
Yea, thus they joyed who now are overjoyed.

Before 1893.

LIFT up thine eyes to seek the invisible :
Stir up thy heart to choose the still unseen :
Strain up thy hope in glad perpetual green
To scale the exceeding height where all saints dwell.
Saints, is it well with you ?—Yea, it is well.—
Where they have reaped, by faith kneel thou to glean :
Because they stooped so low to reap, they lean
Now over golden harps unspeakable.—

But thou purblind and deafened, knowest thou
Those glorious beauties unexperienced
By ear or eye or by heart hitherto?—
I know Whom I have trusted: wherefore now
All amiable, accessible tho' fenced,
Golden Jerusalem floats full in view.

Before 1893.

Love is strong as Death.

As flames that consume the mountains, as winds that coerce the sea,
Thy men of renown show forth Thy might in the clutch of death:
Down they go into silence, yet the Trump of the Jubilee
Swells not Thy praise as swells it the breathless pause of their breath.

What is the flame of their fire, if so I may catch the flame;
What the strength of their strength, if also I may wax strong?
The flaming fire of their strength is the love of Jesu's Name,
In Whom their death is life, their silence utters a song.

Before 1893.

Let them rejoice in their beds.

CRIMSON as the rubies, crimson as the roses,
Crimson as the sinking sun,
Singing on his crimsoned bed each saint reposes,
Fought his fight, his battle won;
Till the rosy east the day of days discloses,
All his work, save waiting, done.

Far above the stars, while underneath the daisies,
Resting, for his race is run,
Unto Thee his heart each quiet saint upraises,
God the Father, Spirit, Son;
Unto Thee his heart, unto Thee his praises,
O Lord God, the Three in One.

Before 1893.

SLAIN in their high places: fallen on rest
Where the eternal peace lights up their faces,
In God's sacred acre breast to breast:—
Slain in their high places.

From all tribes, all families, all races,
Gathered home together; east or west
Sending home its tale of gifts and graces.

Twine, oh twine, heaven's amaranth for their crest,
Raise their praise while home their triumph paces;
Kings by their own King of kings confessed,
Slain in their high places.

Before 1893.

'What hath God wrought!

THE shout of a King is among them:
One day may I be

Of that perfect communion of lovers
contented and free
In the land that is very far off, and
far off from the sea.

The shout of the King is among them.
One King and one song,
One thunder of manifold voices
harmonious and strong,
One King and one love, and one
shout of one worshiping throng.
Before 1893.

Before the Throne, and before the Lamb.

As the voice of many waters all
saints sing as one,
As the voice of an unclouded
thundering;
Unswayed by the changing moon
and unswayed by the sun,
As the voice of many waters all
saints sing.

Circling round the rainbow of
their perfect ring,
Twelve thousand times twelve
thousand voices in unison
Swell the triumph, swell the praise
of Christ the King.

Where raiment is white of blood-
steeped linen slowly spun,
Where crowns are golden of
Love's own largessing,
Where eternally the ecstasy is but
begun,
As the voice of many waters all
saints sing.
Before 1893.

He shall go no more out.

PEACE within, within for evermore:
There the long beatitudes begin:
Overflows the still unwasting store,
Once within.

Left without are death and doubt
and sin;
All man wrestled with and all he bore,
Man who saved his life, skin after
skin.

Blow the trumpet-blast unheard
before,
Shout the unheard-of shout for
these who win,
These, who cast their crowns on
Heaven's high floor
Once within.
Before 1893.

YEA, blessed and holy is he that hath
part in the First Resurrection!
We mark well his bulwarks, we set
up his tokens, we gaze, even we,
On this lustre of God and of Christ,
this creature of flawless per-
fection:
Yea, blessed and holy is he.

But what? an offscouring of earth,
a wreck from the turbulent sea,
A bloodstone unflinchingly hewn for
the Temple's eternal erection,
One scattered and peeled, one
sifted and chastened and
scourged and set free?

Yea, this is that worshipful stone
of the Wise Master Builder's
election,
Yea, this is that King and that
Priest where all Hallows bow
down the knee,
Yea, this man set nigh to the Throne
is Jonathan of David's delection,
Yea, blessed and holy is he.
Before 1893.

THE joy of Saints, like incense turned to fire
In golden censers, soars acceptable;
And high their heavenly hallelujahs swell
Desirous still with still-fulfilled desire.
Sweet thrill the harpstrings of the heavenly choir,
Most sweet their voice while love is all they tell;
Where love is all in all, and all is well
Because their work is love and love their hire.
All robed in white and all with palm in hand,
Crowns too they have of gold and thrones of gold;
The street is golden which their feet have trod,
Or on a sea of glass and fire they stand:
And none of them is young, and none is old,
Except as perfect by the Will of God.

Before 1893.

WHAT are these lovely ones, yea, what are these?
Lo these are they who for pure love of Christ
Stripped off the trammels of soft silken ease,
Beggaring themselves betimes, to be sufficed
Throughout heaven's one eternal day of peace:
By golden streets, thro' gates of pearl unpriced,
They entered on the joys that will not cease,
And found again all firstfruits sacrificed.
And wherefore have you harps, and wherefore palms,
And wherefore crowns, O ye who walk in white?
Because our happy hearts are chanting psalms,
Endless Te Deum for the ended fight;
While thro' the everlasting lapse of calms
We cast our crowns before the Lamb our Might.

Before 1893.

The General Assembly and Church of the Firstborn.

BRING me to see, Lord, bring me yet to see
Those nations of Thy glory and Thy grace
Who splendid in Thy splendour worship Thee.
Light in all eyes, content in every face,
Raptures and voices one while manifold,
Love and are well-beloved the ransomed race:—
Great mitred priests, great kings in crowns of gold,
Patriarchs who head the army of their sons,
Matrons and mothers by their own extolled,
Wise and most harmless holy little ones,
Virgins who, making merry, lead the dance,
Full-breathed victorious racers from all runs,
Home-comers out of every change and chance,
Hermits restored to social neighbourhood,

Aspects which reproduce One Countenance,
Life-losers with their losses all made good,
All blessed hungry and athirst sufficed,
All who bore crosses round the Holy Rood,
Friends, brethren, sisters, of Lord Jesus Christ.

Before 1893.

Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master.

HOW can one man, how can all men,
How can we be like St. Paul,
Like St. John, or like St. Peter,
Like the least of all
Blessed Saints? for we are small.

Love can make us like St. Peter,
Love can make us like St. Paul,
Love can make us like the blessed
Bosom friend of all,
Great St. John, tho' we are small.

Love which clings and trusts and worships,
Love which rises from a fall,
Love which, prompting glad obedience,
Labours most of all,
Love makes great the great and small.

Before 1886.

'As dying, and behold we live!'
So live the Saints while time is flying;
Make all they make, give all they give,
As dying;
Bear all they bear without replying;
They grieve as tho' they did not grieve,
Uplifting praise with prayer and sighing.

Patient thro' life's long-drawn reprieve,
Aloof from strife, at peace from crying,
The morrow to its day they leave,
As dying.

Before 1893.

So great a cloud of Witnesses.

I THINK of the saints I have known, and lift up mine eyes
To the far-away home of beautiful Paradise,
Where the song of saints gives voice to an undividing sea
On whose plain their feet stand firm while they keep their jubilee.
As the sound of waters their voice, as the sound of thunderings,
While they all at once rejoice, while all sing and while each one sings;
Where more saints flock in, and more, and yet more, and again yet more,
And not one turns back to depart thro' the open entrance-door.

O sights of our lovely earth, O sound of our earthly sea,
Speak to me of Paradise, of all blessed saints to me:
Or keep silence touching them, and speak to my heart alone
Of the Saint of saints, the King of kings, the Lamb on the Throne.

Before 1893.

OUR Mothers, lovely women pitiful;
Our Sisters, gracious in their life and death;
To us each unforgotten memory saith:
'Learn as we learned in life's sufficient school,
Work as we worked in patience of our rule,
Walk as we walked, much less by sight than faith,
Hope as we hoped, despite our slips and scathe,
Fearful in joy and confident in dule.'
I know not if they see us or can see;
But if they see us in our painful day,
How looking back to earth from Paradise
Do tears not gather in those loving eyes?—
Ah happy eyes! whose tears are wiped away
Whether or not you bear to look on me.

Before 1893.

SAFE where I cannot lie yet,
Safe where I hope to lie too,
Safe from the fume and the fret;
You, and you,
Whom I never forget.

Safe from the frost and the snow,
Safe from the storm and the sun,
Safe where the seeds wait to grow
One by one
And to come back in blow.

Before 1893.

'Is it well with the child?'

LYING a-dying.
Have done with vain sighing:
Life not lost but treasured,
God Almighty pleasured,
God's daughter fetched and carried,
Christ's bride betrothed and married.
Our tender little dove
Meek-eyed and simple,
Our love goes home to Love:
There shall she walk in white,
Where God shall be the Light,
And God the Temple.

3 *November* 1865.

DEAR Angels and dear disembodied Saints
Unseen around us, worshiping in rest,
May wonder that man's heart so often faints,
And his steps lag along the heavenly quest,
What while his foolish fancy moulds and paints
A fonder hope than all they prove for best;
A lying hope which undermines and taints
His soul, as sin and sloth make manifest.
Sloth, and a lie, and sin: shall these suffice
The unfathomable heart of craving man,
That heart which being a deep calls to the deep?
Behold how many like us rose and ran
When Christ, Life-giver, roused them from their sleep
To rise and run and rest in Paradise!

Before 1893.

To every seed his own body.'

BONE to his bone, grain to his grain of dust :
A numberless reunion shall make whole
Each blessed body for its blessed soul,
Refashioning the aspects of the just.
Each saint who died must live afresh, and must
Ascend resplendent in the aureole
Of his own proper glory to his goal,
As seeds their proper bodies all upthrust.
Each with his own not with another's grace,
Each with his own not with another's heart,
Each with his own not with another's face,
Each dove-like soul mounts to his proper place :—
O faces unforgotten ! if to part
Wrung sore, what will it be to re-embrace ?

Before 1893.

What good shall my life do me?

HAVE dead men long to wait ?—

There is a certain term
For their bodies to the worm
And their souls at heaven gate :
Dust to dust, clod to clod,
These precious things of God,
Trampled underfoot by man
And beast the appointed years.—

Their longest life was but a span
For change and smiles and tears :
Is it worth while to live,
Rejoice and grieve,
Hope, fear, and die ?
Man with man, truth with lie,
The slow show dwindles by :
At last what shall we have
Besides a grave ?—

Lies and shows no more,
No fear, no pain,
But after hope and sleep
Dear joys again.
Those who sowed shall reap :
Those who bore
The Cross shall wear the Crown ;
Those who clomb the steep
There shall sit down.

The Shepherd of the sheep
Feeds His flock there ;
In watered pastures fair
They rest and leap.
'Is it worth while to live ?'
Be of good cheer :
Love casts out fear :
Rise up, achieve.

September 1858.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST WHICH PASSETH KNOWLEDGE

I BORE with thee long weary days and nights,
Through many pangs of heart, through many tears ;
I bore with thee, thy hardness, coldness, slights,
For three-and-thirty years.

Who else had dared for thee what I have dared ?
I plunged the depth most deep from bliss above ;

I not My flesh, I not My spirit spared :
Give thou Me love for love.

For thee I thirsted in the daily drouth,
For thee I trembled in the nightly frost :
Much sweeter thou than honey to My mouth :
Why wilt thou still be lost ?

I bore thee on My shoulders and rejoiced :
Men only marked upon My shoulders borne
The branding cross ; and shouted hungry-voiced,
Or wagged their heads in scorn.

Thee did nails grave upon My hands, thy name
Did thorns for frontlets stamp between Mine eyes :
I, Holy One, put on thy guilt and shame ;
I, God, Priest, Sacrifice.

A thief upon My right hand and My left ;
Six hours alone, athirst, in misery :
At length in death one smote My heart and cleft
A hiding-place for thee.

Nailed to the racking cross, than bed of down
More dear, whereon to stretch Myself and sleep :
So did I win a kingdom,—Share My crown ;
A harvest,—Come and reap.

15 *October* 1858.

A SHADOW OF DOROTHEA

'GOLDEN-HAIRED, lily-white,
Will you pluck me lilies ?
Or will you show me where they grow,
Show where the summer rill is ?
But is your hair of gold or light,
And is your foot of flake or fire,
And have you wings rolled up from sight,
And joy to slake desire ?'

'I pluck young flowers of Paradise,
Lilies and roses red :
A sceptre for my hand,
A crown to crown my golden head.
Love makes me wise :
I sing, I stand,
I pluck palm-branches in the sheltered land.'

'Is there a path to heaven
My heavy foot may tread ?
And will you show that way to go,
That rose and lily bed ?
Which day of all these seven
Will lighten my heart of lead,
Will purge mine eyes and make me wise,
Alive or dead ?'

'There is a heavenward stair—
Mount, strain upwards, strain and strain—
Each step will crumble to your foot
That never shall descend again.
There grows a tree from ancient root
With healing leaves and twelvefold fruit
In musical heaven-air :
Feast with me there.'

'I have a home on earth I cannot leave,
I have a friend on earth I cannot grieve:
Come down to me, I cannot mount to you.'
'Nay, choose between us both,
Choose as you are lief or loth:
You cannot keep these things and have me too.'

11 *November* 1858.

FOR HENRIETTA POLYDORE

On the land and on the sea
Jesus keep both you and me:

Going out and coming in,
Christ keep us both from shame and sin:

In this world, in the world to come,
Keep us safe and lead us home:

To-day in toil, to-night in rest,
Be best beloved and love us best.

16 *January* 1859.

ASH WEDNESDAY

Jesus, do I love Thee?
Thou art far above me,
Seated out of sight,
Hid in heavenly light
Of most highest height.
Martyred hosts implore Thee,
Seraphs fall before Thee,
Angels and Archangels,
Cherub throngs adore Thee.
Blessed she that bore Thee!
All the saints approve Thee,
All the virgins love Thee.
I show as a blot
Blood hath cleansèd not,
As a barren spot
In thy fruitful lot;
I, fig-tree fruit-unbearing,
Thou, righteous Judge unsparing:
What canst Thou do more to me
That shall not more undo me?
Thy Justice hath a sound,
'Why cumbereth it the ground?'
Thy Love with stirrings stronger
Pleads, 'Give it one year longer.'
Thou giv'st me time: but who
Save Thou shall give me dew,
Shall feed my root with blood
And stir my sap for good?—
Oh by Thy gifts that shame me
Give more lest they condemn me.
Good Lord, I ask much of Thee,
But most I ask to love Thee:
Kind Lord, be mindful of me,
Love me and make me love Thee.

21 *March* 1859.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Before the paling of the stars,
Before the winter morn,
Before the earliest cock-crow
Jesus Christ was born:
Born in a stable,
Cradled in a manger,
In the world His hands had made
Born a stranger.

Priest and King lay fast asleep
In Jerusalem,
Young and old lay fast asleep
In crowded Bethlehem:
Saint and Angel, ox and ass,
Kept a watch together,
Before the Christmas daybreak
In the winter weather.

Jesus on his Mother's breast
In the stable cold,
Spotless Lamb of God was He,
Shepherd of the fold:
Let us kneel with Mary Maid,
With Joseph bent and hoary,
With Saint and Angel, ox and ass,
To hail the King of Glory.

26 *August* 1859.

CHRIST OUR ALL IN ALL

(*From* 26 *August* 1859 *to before* 1893.)

The ransomed of the Lord.

THY lovely saints do bring Thee love,
Incense and joy and gold;
Fair star with star, fair dove with dove,
Beloved by Thee of old.
I, Master, neither star nor dove,
Have brought Thee sins and tears;
Yet I too bring a little love
Amid my flaws and fears.
A trembling love that faints and fails
Yet still is love of Thee,
A wondering love that hopes and hails
Thy boundless Love of me;
Love kindling faith and pure desire,
Love following on to bliss,
A spark, O Jesu, from Thy fire,
A drop from Thine abyss.

Before 1893.

LORD, we are rivers running to Thy sea,
Our waves and ripples all derived from Thee:
A nothing we should have, a nothing be,
Except for Thee.
Sweet are the waters of Thy shoreless sea,
Make sweet our waters that make haste to Thee;
Pour in Thy sweetness, that ourselves may be
Sweetness to Thee.

Before 1893.

An exceeding bitter cry.

CONTEMPT and pangs and haunting fears—
Too late for hope, too late for ease,
Too late for rising from the dead;
Too late, too late to bend my knees,
Or bow my head,
Or weep, or ask for tears.

Hark! . . . One I hear Who calls to me:
'Give Me thy thorn and grief and scorn,
Give Me thy ruin and regret.
Press on thro' darkness toward the morn:
One loves thee yet:
Have I forgotten thee?'

Lord, Who art Thou? Lord, is it Thou
My Lord and God Lord Jesus Christ?
How said I that I sat alone
And desolate and unsufficed?
Surely a stone
Would raise Thy praises now!

Before 1893.

O LORD, when Thou didst call me, didst Thou know
My heart disheartened thro' and thro',

Still hankering after Egypt full
in view
Where cucumbers and melons grow?
—'Yea, I knew.'—

But, Lord, when Thou didst choose
me, didst Thou know
How marred I was and withered
too,
Nor rose for sweetness nor for
virtue rue,
Timid and rash, hasty and slow?
—'Yea, I knew.'—

My Lord, when Thou didst love
me, didst Thou know
How weak my efforts were, how
few,
Tepid to love and impotent to
do,
Envious to reap while slack to sow?
—'Yea, I knew.'—

Good Lord, Who knowest what I
cannot know,
And dare not know, my false, my
true,
My new, my old; Good Lord,
arise and do
If loving Thou hast known me so.
—'Yea, I knew.'—

Before 1893.

Thou, God, seest me.

Ah me that I should be
Exposed and open evermore to
Thee!—
'Nay, shrink not from My light,
And I will make thee glorious in
My sight
With the overcoming Shulam-
ite.'—
Yea, Lord, Thou moulding me.

. . . Without a hiding-place
To hide me from the terrors of Thy
Face.—
'Thy hiding-place is here
In Mine own heart, wherefore
the Roman spear
For thy sake I accounted dear.'—
My Jesus! King of Grace.

. . . Without a veil, to give
Whiteness before Thy Face that I
might live.—
'Am I too poor to dress
Thee in My royal robe of
righteousness?
Challenge and prove My Love's
excess.'—
Give, Lord, I will receive.

. . . Without a pool wherein
To wash my piteous self and make
me clean.—
'My Blood hath washed away
Thy guilt, and still I wash thee
day by day:
Only take heed to trust and
pray.'—
Lord, help me to begin.

Before 1893.

Lord Jesus, who would think that
I am Thine?
Ah who would think,
Who sees me ready to turn back or
sink,
That Thou art mine?

I cannot hold Thee fast tho' Thou
art mine:
Hold Thou me fast,
So earth shall know at last and
heaven at last
That I am Thine.

Before 1886.

The Name of Jesus.

JESUS, Lord God from all eternity,
Whom love of us brought down to shame,
I plead Thy Life with Thee,
I plead Thy Death, I plead Thy Name.

Jesus, Lord God of every living soul,
Thy Love exceeds its uttered fame,
Thy Will can make us whole,
I plead Thyself, I plead Thy Name.
Before 1886.

LORD God of Hosts, most Holy and most High,
What made Thee tell Thy Name of Love to me?
What made Thee live our life? what made Thee die?
'My love of thee.'

I pitched so low, Thou so exceeding high,
What was it made Thee stoop to look at me
While flawless sons of God stood wondering by?
'My love of thee.'

What is there which can lift me up on high
That we may dwell together, Thou with me,
When sin and death and suffering are gone by?
'My love of thee.'

O Lord, what is that best thing hid on high
Which makes heaven heaven as Thou hast promised me,
Yea, makes it Christ to live and gain to die?
'My love of thee.'
Before 1886.

'LORD, what have I that I may offer Thee?
Look, Lord, I pray Thee, and see.'—

'What is it thou hast got?
Nay, child, what is it thou hast not?
Thou hast all gifts that I have given to thee:
Offer them all to Me,
The great ones and the small;
I will accept them one and all.'—

'I have a will, good Lord, but it is marred;
A heart both crushed and hard:
Not such as these the gift
Clean-handed lovely saints uplift.'—

'Nay, child, but wilt thou judge for Me?
I crave not thine, but thee.'—

'Ah Lord Who lovest me!
Such as I have now give I Thee.'
Before 1886.

IF I should say 'my heart is in my home,'
I turn away from that high halidom
Where Jesus sits: for nowhere else
But with its treasure dwells
The heart: this Truth and this experience tells.

If I should say 'my heart is in a grave,'
I turn away from Jesus risen to save:

I slight that death He died for me ;
I too deny to see
His beauty and desirability.

O Lord, Whose Heart is deeper than my heart,
Draw mine to Thine to worship where Thou art ;
For Thine own glory join the twain
Never to part again,
Nor to have lived nor to have died in vain.

Before 1886.

LEAF from leaf Christ knows ;
Himself the Lily and the Rose :

Sheep from sheep Christ tells ;
Himself the Shepherd, no one else :

Star and star He names,
Himself outblazing all their flames :

Dove by dove He calls
To set each on the golden walls :

Drop by drop, He counts
The flood of ocean as it mounts :

Grain by grain, His hand
Numbers the innumerable sand.

Lord, I lift to Thee
In peace what is and what shall be :

Lord, in peace I trust
To Thee all spirits and all dust.

Circa 1877.

LORD, carry me.—Nay, but I grant thee strength
To walk and work thy way to Heaven at length.—

Lord, why then am I weak ?—Because I give
Power to the weak, and bid the dying live.—

Lord, I am tired.—He hath not much desired
The goal who at the starting-point is tired.—

Lord, dost Thou know ?—I know what is in man ;
What the flesh can, and what the spirit can.—

Lord, dost Thou care ?—Yea, for thy gain or loss
So much I cared, it brought Me to the Cross.—

Lord, I believe ; help Thou mine unbelief.—
Good is the word ; but rise, for life is brief.

The follower is not greater than the Chief :
Follow thou Me along My way of grief.

Before 1893.

LORD, I am here.—But, child, I look for thee
Elsewhere and nearer Me.—
Lord, that way moans a wide insatiate sea :
How can I come to Thee ?—
Set foot upon the water, test and see
If thou canst come to Me.—
Couldst Thou not send a boat to carry me,
Or dolphin swimming free ?—

Nay, boat nor fish if thy will faileth thee :
For My Will too is free.—
O Lord, I am afraid.—Take hold on Me :
I am stronger than the sea.—
Save, Lord, I perish.—I have hold of thee,
I made and rule the sea,
I bring thee to the haven where thou wouldst be.

Before 1893.

NEW creatures ; the Creator still the Same
For ever and for ever : therefore we
Win hope from God's unsearchable decree,
And glorify His still unchanging Name.
We too are still the same ; and still our claim,
Our trust, our stay, is Jesus, none but He :
He still the Same regards us, and still we
Mount toward Him in old love's accustomed flame.
We know Thy wounded Hands : and Thou dost know
Our praying hands, our hands that clasp and cling
To hold Thee fast and not to let Thee go.
All else be new then, Lord, as Thou hast said :
Since it is Thou, we dare not be afraid,
Our King of old and still our Self-same King.

Before 1893.

King of kings and Lord of lords.

IS this that Name as ointment pourèd forth
For which the virgins love Thee—King of kings
And Lord of lords? All Seraphs clad in wings ;
All Cherubs and all Wheels which south and north,
Which east and west turn not in going forth ;
All many-semblanced ordered Spirits, as rings
Of rainbow in unwonted fashionings,
Might answer, Yes. But we from south and north,
From east and west, a feeble folk who came
By desert ways in quest of land unseen,
A promised land of pasture ever green
And ever springing ever singing wave,
Know best Thy Name of Jesus : Blessed Name,
Man's life and resurrection from the grave.

Before 1893.

THY Name, O Christ, as incense streaming forth
Sweetens our names before God's Holy Face ;
Luring us from the south and from the north
Unto the sacred place.

In Thee God's promise is Amen and Yea.
What art Thou to us? Prize of every lot,

Shepherd and Door, our Life and
Truth and Way :—
Nay, Lord, what art Thou not ?
Before 1893.

The Good Shepherd.

'O SHEPHERD with the bleeding
Feet,
Good Shepherd with the pleading
Voice,
What seekest Thou from hill to
hill ?
Sweet were the valley pastures, sweet
The sound of flocks that bleat their
joys,
And eat and drink at will.
Is one worth seeking, when Thou
hast of Thine
Ninety and nine ?'

'How should I stay my bleeding
Feet,
How should I hush my pleading
Voice ?
I Who chose death and clomb
a hill,
Accounting gall and wormwood
sweet,
That hundredfold might bud My
joys
For love's sake and good will.
I seek My one, for all there bide of
Mine
Ninety and nine.'
Before 1893.

'Rejoice with Me.

'LITTLE Lamb, who lost thee ?'—
'I myself, none other.'—
'Little Lamb, who found thee ?'—
'Jesus, Shepherd, Brother.
Ah, Lord, what I cost Thee !
Canst Thou still desire ?'—
'Still Mine arms surround thee,
Still I lift thee higher,
Draw thee nigher.'
Before 1893.

SHALL not the Judge of all the earth
do right ?
Yea, Lord, altho' Thou say me
nay.
Shall not His Will be to me life and
light ?
Yea, Lord, altho' Thou slay.

Yet, Lord, remembering turn and sift
and see,
Remember tho' Thou sift me thro',
Remember my desire, remember me,
Remember, Lord, and do.
Before 1886.

ME and my gift : kind Lord, behold,
Be not extreme to test or sift ;
Thy Love can turn to fire and gold
Me and my gift.

Myself and mine to Thee I lift :
Gather us to Thee from the cold
Dead outer world where dead
things drift.

If much were mine, then manifold
Should be the offering of my thrift :
I am but poor, yet love makes bold
Me and my gift.
Before 1893.

'He cannot deny Himself.'

LOVE still is Love, and doeth all
things well,
Whether He show me heaven or hell,
Or earth in her decay
Passing away
On a day.

Love still is Love, tho' He should say 'Depart,'
And break my incorrigible heart,
And set me out of sight,
Widowed of light
In the night.

Love still is Love, is Love, if He should say,
'Come,' on that uttermost dread day;
'Come,' unto very me,
'Come where I be,
Come and see.'

Love still is Love, whatever comes to pass:
O Only Love, make me Thy glass,
Thy pleasure to fulfil
By loving still,
Come what will.

Before 1893.

Slain from the foundation of the world.

SLAIN for man, slain for me, O Lamb of God, look down;
Loving to the end, look down, behold and see:
Turn Thine Eyes of pity, turn not on us Thy frown,
O Lamb of God, slain for man, slain for me.

Mark the wrestling, mark the race for indeed a crown;
Mark our chariots how we drive them heavily;
Mark the foe upon our track blasting thundering down,
O Lamb of God, slain for man, slain for me.

Set as a Cloudy Pillar against them Thy frown,
Thy Face of Light toward us gracious utterly;
Help granting, hope granting, until Thou grant a crown,
O Lamb of God, slain for man, slain for me.

Before 1893.

LORD JESU, Thou art sweetness to my soul:
I to myself am bitterness:
Regard my fainting struggle toward the goal,
Regard my manifold distress,
O Sweet Jesu.

Thou art Thyself my goal, O Lord my King:
Stretch forth Thy hand to save my soul:
What matters more or less of journeying?
While I touch Thee I touch my goal,
O Sweet Jesu.

Before 1893.

'I, LORD, Thy foolish sinner low and small,
Lack all.
His heart too high was set
Who asked, What lack I yet?
Woe's me at my most woeful pass!
I, Lord, who scarcely dare adore,
Weep sore:
Steeped in this rotten world I fear to rot.
Alas what lack I not?
Alas alas for me! alas
More and yet more!'—

'Nay, stand up on thy feet, betaking thee
To Me.
Bring fear; but much more bring
Hope to thy patient King:
What, is My pleasure in thy death?
I loved that youth who little knew
The true
Width of his want, yet worshipped with goodwill:
So love I thee, and still
Prolong thy day of grace and breath.
Rise up and do.'—

'Lord, let me know mine end, and certify
When I
Shall die and have to stand
Helpless on Either Hand,
Cut off, cut off, my day of grace.'—
Not so: for what is that to thee?
I see
The measure and the number of thy day.
Keep patience, tho' I slay;
Keep patience till thou see My Face.
Follow thou Me.'

Before 1893.

'Because He first loved us.'

'I WAS hungry, and Thou feddest me;
Yea, Thou gavest drink to slake my thirst:
O Lord, what love gift can I offer Thee
Who hast loved me first?'—

'Feed My hungry brethren for My sake;
Give them drink, for love of them and Me:
Love them as I loved thee, when Bread I brake
In pure love of thee.'—

'Yea, Lord, I will serve them by Thy grace;
Love Thee, seek Thee, in them; wait and pray:
Yet would I love Thyself, Lord, face to face,
Heart to heart, one day.'—

'Let to-day fulfil its daily task,
Fill thy heart and hand to them and Me:
To-morrow thou shalt ask, and shalt not ask
Half I keep for thee.'

Before 1893.

LORD, hast Thou so loved us, and will not we
Love Thee with heart and mind and strength and soul,
Desiring Thee beyond our glorious goal,
Beyond the heaven of heavens desiring Thee?
Each saint, all saints cry out: Yea me, yea me,
Thou hast desired beyond an aureole,
Beyond Thy many Crowns, beyond the whole
Ninety and nine unwandering family.
Souls in green pastures of the watered land,
Faint pilgrim souls wayfaring thro' the sand,
Abide with Thee and in Thee are at rest:
Yet evermore, kind Lord, renew Thy quest
After new wanderers; such as once Thy Hand
Gathered, Thy Shoulders bore, Thy Heart caressed.

Before 1893.

As the dove, which found no rest
For the sole of her foot, flew back
To the ark her only nest
And found safety there;
Because Noah put forth his hand,
Drew her in from ruin and wrack,
And was more to her than the land
And the air:

So my spirit, like that dove,
Fleeth away to an ark
Where dwelleth a Heart of Love,
A Hand pierced to save,
Tho' the sun and the moon should fail,
Tho' the stars drop into the dark,
And my body lay itself pale
In a grave.

Before 1893.

Thou art Fairer than the children of men.

A ROSE, a lily, and the Face of Christ,
Have all our hearts sufficed:
For He is Rose of Sharon nobly born,
Our Rose without a thorn;
And He is Lily of the Valley, He
Most sweet in purity.
But when we come to name Him as He is,
Godhead, Perfection, Bliss,
All tongues fall silent, while pure hearts alone
Complete their orison.

Before 1886.

'As the Apple Tree among the trees of the wood.'

AS one red rose in a garden where all other roses are white
Blossoms alone in its glory, crowned all alone
In a solitude of own sweetness an
fragrance of own delight,
With loveliness not another's an
thorns its own;
As one ruddy sun amid million orb
comely and colourless,
Among all others, above all othe
is known;
As it were alone in the garden, alon
in the heavenly place,
Chief and centre of all, in fellow
ship yet alone.

Before 1893.

NONE other Lamb, none other Nam
None other Hope in heaven
earth or sea,
None other Hiding-place from gu
and shame,
None beside Thee.

My faith burns low, my hope bur
low,
Only my heart's desire cries out
me
By the deep thunder of its want an
woe,
Cries out to Thee.

Lord, Thou art Life tho' I be dea
Love's Fire Thou art, howev
cold I be:
Nor heaven have I, nor place to l
my head,
Nor home, but Thee.

Before 1893.

Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend forget not.

FRIENDS, I commend to you t
narrow way:
Not because I, please God, w
walk therein,

But rather for the Love Feast of that day,
The exceeding prize which whoso will may win.
Earth is half spent and rotting at the core,
Here hollow death's heads mock us with a grin,
Here heartiest laughter leaves us tired and sore.
Men heap up pleasures and enlarge desire,
Outlive desire, and famished evermore
Consume themselves within the undying fire.
Yet not for this God made us: not for this
Christ sought us far and near to draw us nigher,
Sought us and found and paid our penalties.
If one could answer 'Nay' to God's command,
Who shall say 'Nay' when Christ pleads all He is
For us, and holds us with a wounded Hand?

26 *August* 1859.

Surely He hath borne our griefs.

CHRIST'S Heart was wrung for me, if mine is sore;
And if my feet are weary, His have bled;
He had no place wherein to lay His Head;
If I am burdened, He was burdened more.
The cup I drink He drank of long before;
He felt the unuttered anguish which I dread;
He hungered Who the hungry thousands fed,
And thirsted Who the world's refreshment bore.
If grief be such a looking-glass as shows
Christ's Face and man's in some sort made alike,
Then grief is pleasure with a subtle taste:
Wherefore should any fret or faint or haste?
Grief is not grievous to a soul that knows
Christ comes,—and listens for that hour to strike.

Before 1886.

They toil not neither do they spin.

CLOTHER of the lily, Feeder of the sparrow,
Father of the fatherless, dear Lord,
Tho' Thou set me as a mark against Thine arrow,
As a prey unto Thy sword,
As a ploughed-up field beneath Thy harrow,
As a captive in Thy cord,
Let that cord be love; and some day make my narrow
Hallowed bed according to Thy Word. Amen.

Before 1893.

DARKNESS and light are both alike to Thee:
Therefore to Thee I lift my darkened face;
Upward I look with eyes that fail to see,
Athirst for future light and present grace.

I trust the Hand of Love I scarcely
trace.
With breath that fails I cry, Re-
member me :
Add breath to breath so I may
run my race
That where Thou art there may Thy
servant be.
For Thou art gulf and fountain of
my love,
I unreturning torrent to Thy sea,
Yea Thou the measureless
ocean for my rill :
Seeking I find, and finding
seek Thee still :
And oh that I had wings as hath a
dove,
Then would I flee away to rest
with Thee.
Before 1886.

'And now why tarriest thou?'

LORD, grant us grace to mount by
steps of grace
From grace to grace nearer, my
God, to Thee ;
Not tarrying for to-morrow,
Lest we lie down in sorrow
And never see
Unveiled Thy Face.

Life is a vapour vanishing in haste ;
Life is a day whose sun grows
pale to set ;
Life is a stint and sorrow,
One day and not the morrow ;
Precious, while yet
It runs to waste.

Lord, strengthen us ; lest fainting
by the way
We come not to Thee, we who
come from far ;
Lord, bring us to that morrow
Which makes an end of sorrow,
Where all saints are
On holyday.

Where all the saints rest who have
heard Thy call,
Have risen and striven and now
rejoice in rest :
Call us too home from sorrow
To rest in Thee to-morrow ;
In Thee our Best,
In Thee our All.
Before 1893.

HAVE I not striven, my God, and
watched and prayed ?
Have I not wrestled in mine
agony ?
Wherefore still turn Thy Face o
Grace from me ?
Is Thine Arm shortened that Thou
canst not aid ?
Thy silence breaks my heart : speak
tho' to upbraid,
For Thy rebuke yet bids us follow
Thee.
I grope and grasp not ; gaze, bu
cannot see.
When out of sight and reach my
bed is made,
And piteous men and women cease
to blame,
Whispering and wistful of my
gain or loss ;
Thou Who for my sake once
didst feel the Cross,
Lord, wilt Thou turn and look
upon me then,
And in Thy Glory bring to nough
my shame,
Confessing me to angels and to
men ?
30 *September* 1863.

God is our Hope and Strength.

TEMPEST and terror below; but
Christ the Almighty above.
Tho' the depth of the deep over-
flow, tho' fire run along on the
ground,
Tho' all billows and flames make a
noise,—and where is an Ark
for the dove?—
Tho' sorrows rejoice against joys,
and death and destruction
abound:
Yet Jesus abolisheth death, and
Jesus Who loves us we love;
His dead are renewed with a
breath, His lost are the sought
and the found.
Thy wanderers call and recall, Thy
dead men lift out of the ground;
O Jesus, Who lovest us all, stoop
low from Thy Glory above:
Where sin hath abounded make
grace to abound and to super-
abound,
Till we gaze on Thee face unto Face,
and respond to Thee love unto
Love.

Before 1893.

DAY and night the Accuser makes
no pause,
Day and night protest the Righteous
Laws,
Good and Evil witness to man's
flaws;
Man the culprit, man's the ruined
cause,
Man midway to death's devouring
jaws
And the worm that gnaws.

Day and night our Jesus makes no
pause,
Pleads His own fulfilment of all laws,
Veils with His Perfections mortal
flaws,
Clears the culprit, pleads the
desperate cause,
Plucks the dead from death's de-
vouring jaws
And the worm that gnaws.

Before 1893.

O MINE enemy
Rejoice not over me!
Jesus waiteth to be gracious:
I will yet arise,
Mounting free and far,
Past sun and star,
To a house prepared and spacious
In the skies.

Lord, for Thine own sake
Kindle my heart and break;
Make mine anguish efficacious
Wedded to Thine own:
Be not Thy dear pain,
Thy Love, in vain,
Thou Who waitest to be gracious
On Thy Throne.

Before 1893.

LORD, dost Thou look on me, and
will not I
Launch out my heart to Heaven
to look on Thee?
Here if one loved me I should
turn to see,
And often think on him and often
sigh,
And by a tender friendship make
reply
To love gratuitous poured forth
on me,
And nurse a hope of happy days
to be,

And mean 'until we meet' in each
good-bye.
Lord, Thou dost look and love is in
Thine Eyes,
Thy heart is set upon me day
and night,
Thou stoopest low to set me
far above:
O Lord, that I may love Thee make
me wise;
That I may see and love Thee
grant me sight;
And give me love that I may
give Thee love.

Before 1893.

Peace I leave with you.

TUMULT and turmoil, trouble and
toil,
Yet peace withal in a painful
heart;
Never a grudge and never a broil,
And ever the better part.

O my King and my heart's own
choice,
Stretch Thy Hand to Thy flutter-
ing dove;
Teach me, call to me with Thy
Voice,
Wrap me up in Thy Love.

Before 1893.

O CHRIST our All in each, our All
in all!
Others have this or that, a love,
a friend,
A trusted teacher, a long-worked-
for end:
But what to me were Peter or were
Paul
Without Thee? fame or friend if
such might be?
Thee wholly will I love, Thee
wholly seek,
Follow Thy foot-track, hearken for
Thy call.
O Christ mine All in all, my
flesh is weak,
A trembling fawning tyrant unto
me:
Turn, look upon me, let me
hear Thee speak:
Tho' bitter billows of Thine
utmost sea
Swathe me, and darkness build
around its wall,
Yet will I rise, Thou lifting when
fall,
And if Thou hold me fast, yea
cleave to Thee.

Before 1886.

BECAUSE Thy Love hath sought
me,
All mine is Thine and Thine is
mine:
Because Thy Blood hath bought
me,
I will not be mine own but Thine.

I lift my heart to Thy Heart,
Thy Heart sole resting-place for
mine:
Shall Thy Heart crave for my heart
And shall not mine crave back
for Thine?

Before 1893.

THY fainting spouse, yet still Thy
spouse;
Thy trembling dove, yet still Thy
dove;
Thine own by mutual vows,
By mutual love.

Recall Thy vows, if not her vows ;
Recall Thy Love, if not her love :
For weak she is, Thy spouse,
And tired, Thy dove.
Before 1893.

Like as the hart desireth the water brooks.

My heart is yearning :
Behold my yearning heart,
And lean low to satisfy
Its lonely beseeching cry,
For Thou its fulness art.

Turn, as once turning
Thou didst behold Thy Saint
In deadly extremity ;
Didst look, and win back to Thee
His will frighted and faint.

Kindle my burning
From Thine unkindled Fire ;
Fill me with gifts and with grace
That I may behold Thy Face,
For Thee I desire.

My heart is yearning,
Yearning and thrilling thro'
For Thy Love mine own of old,
For Thy Love unknown, untold,
Ever old, ever new.
Before 1893.

That where I am, there ye may be also.

How know I that it looms lovely
that land I have never seen,
With morning-glories and heartsease
and unexampled green,
With neither heat nor cold in the
balm-redolent air ?
Some of this, not all, I know ;
but this is so ;
Christ is there.

How know I that blessedness befalls
who dwell in Paradise,
The outwearied hearts refreshing,
rekindling the worn-out eyes,
All souls singing, seeing, rejoicing
everywhere ?
Nay, much more than this I
know ; for this is so ;
Christ is there.

O Lord Christ, Whom having not
seen I love and desire to
love,
O Lord Christ, Who lookest on me
uncomely yet still Thy dove,
Take me to Thee in Paradise, Thine
own made fair ;
For whatever else I know, this
thing is so ;
Thou art there.
Before 1893.

Judge not according to the appearance.

LORD, purge our eyes to see
Within the seed a tree,
Within the glowing egg a bird,
Within the shroud a butterfly :

Till taught by such, we see
Beyond all creatures Thee,
And hearken for Thy tender
word,
And hear it, 'Fear not : it is I.'
Before 1893.

My God, wilt Thou accept, and will
not we
Give aught to Thee ?
The kept we lose, the offered we
retain
Or find again.

Yet if our gift were lost, we well might lose
All for Thy use:
Well lost for Thee Whose love is all for us
Gratuitous.
Before 1893.

A CHILL blank world. Yet over the utmost sea
The light of a coming dawn is rising to me,
No more than a paler shade of darkness as yet;
While I lift my heart, O Lord, my heart unto Thee
Who hast not forgotten me, yea, Who wilt not forget.
Forget not Thy sorrowful servant, O Lord my God,
Weak as I cry, faint as I cry underneath Thy rod,
Soon to lie dumb before Thee a body devoid of breath,
Dust to dust, ashes to ashes, a sod to the sod:
Forget not my life, O my Lord, forget not my death.
Before 1893.

The Chiefest among ten thousand.

O JESU, better than Thy gifts
Art Thou Thine only Self to us!
Palm branch its triumph, harp uplifts
Its triumph-note melodious:
But what are such to such as we?
O Jesu, better than Thy saints
Art Thou Thine only Self to us!
The heart faints and the spirit faints
For only Thee all-Glorious,
For Thee, O only Lord, for Thee.
Before 1893.

EASTER EVEN

THERE is nothing more that the can do
For all their rage and boast:
Caiaphas with his blasphemin crew,
Herod with his host;

Pontius Pilate in his judgment hall
Judging their Judge and his,
Or he who led them all and passe them all,
Arch-Judas with his kiss.

The sepulchre made sure wi ponderous stone,
Seal that same stone, O priest:
It may be thou shalt block t Holy One
From rising in the east.

Set a watch about the sepulchre
To watch on pain of death:
They must hold fast the stone One should stir
And shake it from beneath.

God Almighty, He can break a se
And roll away a stone:
Can grind the proud in dust w would not kneel,
And crush the mighty one.

There is nothing more that th can do
For all their passionate care,
Those who sit in dust, the bless few,
And weep and rend their hair—

Peter, Thomas, Mary Magdalen,
The Virgin unreproved,
Joseph and Nicodemus forem men,
And John the well-beloved.

Bring your finest linen and your spice,
Swathe the sacred Dead,
Bind with careful hands and piteous eyes
The napkin round His head:

Lay Him in the garden-rock to rest:
Rest you the Sabbath length:
The Sun that went down crimson in the west
Shall rise renewed in strength.

God Almighty shall give joy for pain,
Shall comfort him who grieves:
Lo He with joy shall doubtless come again
And with Him bring His sheaves.

23 *March* 1861.

THE OFFERING OF THE NEW LAW

ONCE I thought to sit so high
In the palace of the sky:
Now I thank God for His grace
If I may fill the lowest place.

Once I thought to scale so soon
Heights above the changing moon:
Now I thank God for delay:—
To-day: it yet is called to-day.

While I stumble, halt and blind,
Lo He waiteth to be kind:
Bless me soon or bless me slow
Except He bless I let not go.

Once for earth I laid my plan,
Once I leaned on strength of man:
When my hope was swept aside
I stayed my broken heart on pride:
Broken reed hath pierced my hand,
Fell my house I built on sand,
Roofless, wounded, maimed by sin,
Fightings without and fears within.

Yet, His tree, He feeds my root:
Yet, His branch, He prunes for fruit:
Yet, His sheep, these eves and morns
He seeks for me among the thorns.

With Thine Image stamped of old,
Find Thy coin more choice than gold:
Known to Thee by name, recall
To Thee Thy homesick prodigal.

Sacrifice and offering
None there is that I can bring—
None save what is Thine alone:
I bring Thee, Lord, but of Thine own.

Broken Body, Blood outpoured,
These I bring, my God, my Lord;
Wine of Life and Living Bread,
With these for me Thy board is spread.

23 *May* 1861.

BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

BY the waters of Babylon
We sit down and weep,
Far from the pleasant land
Where our fathers sleep:
Far from our Holy Place
From which the Glory is gone:
We sit in dust and weep
By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon
The willow-trees grow rank:

We hang our harps thereon
Silent upon the bank.
Before us the days are dark,
And dark the days that are gone:
We grope in the very dark
By the waters of Babylon.

By the waters of Babylon
We thirst for Jordan yet,
We pine for Jerusalem
Whereon our hearts are set:
Our priests defiled and slain,
Our princes ashamed and gone,
Oh how should we forget
By the waters of Babylon?

By the waters of Babylon
Though the wicked grind the just,
Our seed shall yet strike root
And shall shoot up from the dust:
The captive shall lead captive,
The slave rise up and begone,
And thou too shalt sit in dust,
O daughter of Babylon.

1 *December* 1861.

WITHIN THE VEIL

SHE holds a lily in her hand,
Where long ranks of Angels stand:
A silver lily for her wand.

All her hair falls sweeping down,
Her hair that is a golden brown,
A crown beneath her golden crown.

Blooms a rose-bush at her knee,
Good to smell and good to see:
It bears a rose for her, for me:

Her rose a blossom richly grown,
My rose a bud not fully blown
But sure one day to be mine own.

13 *December* 1861.

GOOD FRIDAY

AM I a stone, and not a sheep,
That I can stand, O Christ, beneath Thy cross,
To number drop by drop Thy Blood's slow loss,
And yet not weep?

Not so those women loved
Who with exceeding grief lamented Thee;
Not so fallen Peter weeping bitterly;
Not so the thief was moved;

Not so the Sun and Moon
Which hid their faces in a starless sky,
A horror of great darkness at broad noon—
I, only I.

Yet give not o'er,
But seek Thy sheep, true Shepherd of the flock;
Greater than Moses, turn and look once more
And smite a rock.

20 *April* 1862.

OUT OF THE DEEP

HAVE mercy, Thou my God—mercy, my God!
For I can hardly bear life day by day.
Be I here or there, I fret myself away:
Lo for Thy staff I have but felt Thy rod
Along this tedious desert-path long trod.

When will Thy judgment judge
me, yea or nay?
I pray for grace: but then my
sins unpray
My prayer: on holy ground I fool
stand shod—
While still Thou haunt'st me, faint
upon the cross,
A sorrow beyond sorrow in Thy
look,
Unutterable craving for my
soul.
All-faithful Thou, Lord: I, not
Thou, forsook
Myself: I traitor slunk back
from the goal:
Lord, I repent — help Thou my
helpless loss.

17 December 1862.

FOR A MERCY RECEIVED

THANK God who spared me what
I feared!
Once more I gird myself to run.
Thy promise stands, Thou Faith-
ful One.
Horror of darkness disappeared
At length: once more I see the
sun,

And dare to wait in hope for Spring,
To face and bear the Winter's
cold:
The dead cocoon shall yet unfold
And give to light the living wing:
There's hidden sap beneath the
mould.

My God, how could my courage
flag
So long as Thou art still the
same?
For what were labour, failure,
shame,
Whilst Thy sure promise doth not
lag,
And Thou dost shield me with
Thy Name?

Yet am I weak, my faith is weak,
My heart is weak that pleads with
Thee:
O Thou that art not far to seek,
Turn to me, hearken when I speak,
Stretch forth Thy hand to succour
me.

Through many perils have I past,
Deaths, plagues, and wonders,
have I seen:
Till now Thy hand hath held me
fast:
Lord, help me, hold me, to the last:
Still be what Thou hast always
been.

Open Thy Heart of Love to me,
Give me Thyself, keep nothing
back,
Even as I give myself to Thee.
Love paid by love doth nothing
lack,
And Love to pay love is not slack.

Love doth so grace and dignify
That beggars sue as king with
king
Before the Throne of Grace on high:
My God, be gracious to my cry:
My God, accept what gift I
bring:—

A heart that loves: though soiled
and bruised,
Yet chosen by Thee in time of
yore.

Who ever came and was refused
By thee? Do, Lord, as Thou art used
To do, and make me love Thee more.

13 *January* 1863.

MARTYRS' SONG

We meet in joy, though we part in sorrow;
We part to-night, but we meet to-morrow.
Be it flood or blood the path that's trod,
All the same it leads home to God:
Be it furnace-fire voluminous,
One like God's Son will walk with us.

What are these that glow from afar,
These that lean over the golden bar,
Strong as the lion, pure as the dove,
With open arms and hearts of love?
They the blessed ones gone before,
They the blessed for evermore.
Out of great tribulation they went
Home to their home of Heaven-content;
Through flood or blood or furnace-fire,
To the rest that fulfils desire.

What are these that fly as a cloud,
With flashing heads and faces bowed,
In their mouths a victorious psalm,
In their hands a robe and a palm?
Welcoming angels these that shine,
Your own angel, and yours, and mine;
Who have hedged us both day and night
On the left hand and on the right,
Who have watched us both night and day
Because the devil keeps watch to slay.

Light above light, and Bliss beyond bliss,
Whom words cannot utter, lo Who is This?
As a King with many crowns He stands,
And our names are graven upon His hands:
As a Priest, with God-uplifted eyes,
He offers for us His Sacrifice;
As the Lamb of God for sinners slain,
That we too may live He lives again;
As our Champion behold Him stand,
Strong to save us, at God's Right Hand.

God the Father give us grace
To walk in the light of Jesus' Face:
God the Son give us a part
In the hiding-place of Jesus' Heart:
God the Spirit so hold us up
That we may drink of Jesus' cup.

Death is short, and life is long;
Satan is strong, but Christ more strong.
At His Word Who hath led us hither
The Red Sea must part hither and thither.
At His Word Who goes before us too
Jordan must cleave to let us through.

Yet one pang searching and sore,
And then Heaven for evermore:
Yet one moment awful and dark,

Then safety within the Veil and the Ark;
Yet one effort by Christ His grace,
Then Christ for ever face to face.

God the Father we will adore,
In Jesus' Name, now and evermore:
God the Son we will love and thank
In this flood and on the farther bank;
God the Holy Ghost we will praise,
In Jesus' Name through endless days:
God Almighty, God Three in One,
God Almighty, God alone.

20 *March* 1863.

CONSIDER

Consider
The lilies of the field whose bloom is brief:
We are as they;
Like them we fade away
As doth a leaf.

Consider
The sparrows of the air of small account;
Our God doth view
Whether they fall or mount,—
He guards us too.

Consider
The lilies that do neither spin nor toil,
Yet are most fair:—
What profits all this care
And all this coil?

Consider
The birds that have no barn nor harvest-weeks;
God gives them food:—
Much more our Father seeks
To do us good.

7 *May* 1863.

THE LOWEST PLACE

Give me the lowest place; not that I dare
Ask for that lowest place, but Thou hast died
That I might live and share
Thy glory by Thy side.

Give me the lowest place: or if for me
That lowest place too high, make one more low
Where I may sit and see
My God and love Thee so.

25 *July* 1863.

COME UNTO ME

Oh for the time gone by when thought of Christ
Made His yoke easy and His burden light!
When my heart stirred within me at the sight
Of altar spread for awful Eucharist:
When all my hopes His promises sufficed:
When my soul watched for Him, by day, by night:
When my lamp lightened and my robe was white,
And all seemed loss except the pearl unpriced.
Yet, since He calls me still with tender call,
Since He remembers whom I half forgot,
I even will run my race and bear my lot:
For Faith the walls of Jericho cast down,

And Hope to whoso runs holds
forth a crown,
And Love is Christ, and Christ is
all in all.

23 *February* 1864.

WHO SHALL DELIVER ME?

GOD strengthen me to bear myself;
That heaviest weight of all to bear,
Inalienable weight of care.

All others are outside myself;
I lock my door and bar them out,
The turmoil, tedium, gad-about.

I lock my door upon myself,
And bar them out; but who shall
wall
Self from myself, most loathed of
all?

If I could once lay down myself,
And start self-purged upon the race
That all must run! Death runs
apace.

If I could set aside myself,
And start with lightened heart upon
The road by all men overgone!

God harden me against myself,
This coward with pathetic voice
Who craves for ease, and rest, and
joys:

Myself, arch-traitor to myself;
My hollowest friend, my deadliest
foe,
My clog whatever road I go.

Yet One there is can curb myself,
Can roll the strangling load from
me,
Break off the yoke and set me free.

1 *March* 1864.

IN PATIENCE

I WILL not faint, but trust in God
Who this my lot hath given:
He leads me by the thorny road
Which is the road to heaven.
Though sad my day that lasts so long,
At evening I shall have a song:
Though dim my day until the night,
At evening-time there shall be light.

My life is but a working day
Whose tasks are set aright:
A while to work, a while to pray,
And then a quiet night.
And then, please God, a quiet night
Where Saints and Angels walk in
white:
One dreamless sleep from work and
sorrow,
But re-awakening on the morrow.

19 *March* 1864.

NONE WITH HIM

MY God, to live: how didst Thou
bear to live,
Preaching and teaching, toiling
to and fro?
Few men accepting what Thou
hadst to give,
Few men prepared to know
Thy Face, to see the truth Thou
cam'st to show.

My God, to die: how didst Thou
bear to die
That long slow death in weariness
of pain?
A curse and an astonishment, past
by,
Pointed at, mocked again,
By men for whom Thy blood was
shed in vain.

Whilst I do hardly bear my easy life,
And hardly face my easy-coming death:
I turn to flee before the tug of strife;
And shrink with troubled breath
From sleep, that is not death, Thy Spirit saith.

14 *June* 1864.

BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON

B.C. 570

HERE, where I dwell, I waste to skin and bone;
The curse is come upon me, and I waste
In penal torment powerless to atone.
The curse is come on me, which makes no haste
And doth not tarry, crushing both the proud
Hard man and him the sinner double-faced.
Look not upon me, for my soul is bowed
Within me, as my body in this mire;
My soul crawls dumb-struck, sore bestead and cowed.
As Sodom and Gomorrah scourged by fire,
As Jericho before God's trumpet-peal,
So we the elect ones perish in His ire.
Vainly we gird on sackcloth, vainly kneel
With famished faces toward Jerusalem:
His heart is shut against us not to feel,
His ears against our cry He shutteth them,
His hand He shorteneth that He will not save,
His law is loud against us to condemn:
And we, as unclean bodies in the grave
Inheriting corruption and the dark,
Are outcast from His presence which we crave.
Our Mercy hath departed from His Ark,
Our Glory hath departed from His rest,
Our Shield hath left us naked as a mark
Unto all pitiless eyes made manifest.
Our very Father hath forsaken us,
Our God hath cast us from Him: we oppress'd
Unto our foes are even marvellous,
A hissing and a butt for pointing hands,
Whilst God Almighty hunts and grinds us thus;
For He hath scattered us in alien lands,
Our priests, our princes, our anointed king,
And bound us hand and foot with brazen bands.
Here while I sit, my painful heart takes wing
Home to the home-land I may see no more,
Where milk and honey flow, where waters spring
And fail not, where I dwelt in days of yore
Under my fig-tree and my fruitful vine,

There where my parents dwelt at ease before :
Now strangers press the olives that are mine,
Reap all the corners of my harvest-field,
And make their fat hearts wanton with my wine.
To them my trees, to them my gardens yield
Their sweets and spices and their tender green,
O'er them in noontide heat outspread their shield.
Yet these are they whose fathers had not been
Housed with my dogs, whom hip and thigh we smote
And with their blood washed their pollutions clean,
Purging the land which spewed them from its throat ;
Their daughters took we for a pleasant prey,
Choice tender ones on whom the fathers doat.
Now they in turn have led our own away ;
Our daughters and our sisters and our wives
Sore weeping as they weep who curse the day,
To live, remote from help, dishonoured lives,
Soothing their drunken masters with a song,
Or dancing in their golden tinkling gyves :
Accurst if they remember through the long
Estrangement of their exile, twice accurst
If they forget and join the accursèd throng.

How doth my heart that is so wrung not burst
When I remember that my way was plain,
And that God's candle lit me at the first,
Whilst now I grope in darkness, grope in vain,
Desiring but to find Him Who is lost,
To find Him once again, but once again !
His wrath came on us to the uttermost,
His covenanted and most righteous wrath :
Yet this is He of Whom we made our boast,
Who lit the Fiery Pillar in our path,
Who swept the Red Sea dry before our feet,
Who in His jealousy smote kings, and hath
Sworn once to David : One shall fill thy seat
Born of thy body, as the sun and moon
Stablished for aye in sovereignty complete.
O Lord, remember David, and that soon.
The Glory hath departed, Ichabod !
Yet now, before our sun grow dark at noon,
Before we come to nought beneath Thy rod,
Before we go down quick into the pit,
Remember us for good, O God our God :—
Thy Name will I remember, praising it,
Though Thou forget me, though Thou hide Thy face,

And blot me from the Book which
Thou hast writ,
Thy Name will I remember in my
praise
And call to mind Thy faithfulness
of old,
Though as a weaver Thou cut off
my days
And end me as a tale ends that
is told.

29 *June* 1864.

DESPISED AND REJECTED

My sun has set, I dwell
In darkness as a dead man out of
sight;
And none remains, not one, that I
should tell
To him mine evil plight
This bitter night.
I will make fast my door
That hollow friends may trouble me
no more.

'Friend, open to Me.'—'Who is
this that calls?
Nay, I am deaf as are my walls:
Cease crying, for I will not hear
Thy cry of hope or fear.
Others were dear,
Others forsook me: what art thou
indeed
That I should heed
Thy lamentable need?
Hungry should feed,
Or stranger lodge thee here?'

'Friend, My Feet bleed.
Open thy door to Me and comfort
Me.'
I will not open, trouble me no more.
Go on thy way footsore,
I will not rise and open unto thee.'

'Then is it nothing to thee? Open,
see
Who stands to plead with thee.
Open, lest I should pass thee by,
and thou
One day entreat my Face
And howl for grace,
And I be deaf as thou art now.
Open to Me.'

Then I cried out upon him: 'Cease,
Leave me in peace:
Fear not that I should crave
Aught thou mayst have.
Leave me in peace, yea trouble me
no more,
Lest I arise and chase thee from my
door.
What, shall I not be let
Alone, that thou dost vex me yet?'

But all night long that voice spake
urgently,
'Open to Me.'
Still harping in mine ears:
'Rise, let Me in.'
Pleading with tears:
'Open to Me, that I may come to
thee.'
While the dew dropped, while the
dark hours were cold:
'My Feet bleed, see My Face,
See My Hands bleed that bring thee
grace,
My Heart doth bleed for thee,—
Open to Me.'

So till the break of day:
Then died away
That voice, in silence as of sorrow;
Then footsteps echoing like a sigh
Passed me by,
Lingering footsteps slow to pass.

On the morrow
I saw upon the grass
Each footprint marked in blood, and on my door
The mark of blood for evermore.

10 *October* 1864.

WEARY IN WELL-DOING

I WOULD have gone; God bade me stay:
I would have worked; God bade me rest.
He broke my will from day to day;
He read my yearnings unexprest,
And said them nay.

Now I would stay; God bids me go:
Now I would rest; God bids me work.
He breaks my heart tost to and fro;
My soul is wrung with doubts that lurk
And vex it so.

I go, Lord, where Thou sendest me;
Day after day I plod and moil:
But, Christ my God, when will it be
That I may let alone my toil
And rest with Thee?

22 *October* 1864.

BIRDS OF PARADISE

GOLDEN-WINGED, silver-winged,
Winged with flashing flame,
Such a flight of birds I saw,
Birds without a name:
Singing songs in their own tongue—
Song of songs—they came.

One to another calling,
Each answering each,
One to another calling
In their proper speech:
High above my head they wheeled,
Far out of reach.

On wings of flame they went and came
With a cadenced clang:
Their silver wings tinkled,
Their golden wings rang;
The wind it whistled through their wings
Where in heaven they sang.

They flashed and they darted
Awhile before mine eyes,
Mounting, mounting, mounting still,
In haste to scale the skies,
Birds without a nest on earth,
Birds of Paradise.

Where the moon riseth not
Nor sun seeks the west,
There to sing their glory
Which they sing at rest,
There to sing their love-song
When they sing their best:—

Not in any garden
That mortal foot hath trod,
Not in any flowering tree
That springs from earthly sod,
But in the garden where they dwell,
The Paradise of God.

14 *November* 1864.

DOST THOU NOT CARE?

'I LOVE and love not: Lord, it breaks my heart
To love and not to love.
Thou veiled within Thy glory, gone apart
Into Thy shrine which is above,

Dost Thou not love me, Lord, or care
For this mine ill?'—
'I love thee here or there,
I will accept thy broken heart—
lie still.'

'Lord, it was well with me in time
gone by
That cometh not again,
When I was fresh and cheerful, who
but I?
I fresh, I cheerful: worn with pain
Now, out of sight and out of heart;
O Lord, how long?'—
'I watch thee as thou art,
I will accept thy fainting heart—
be strong.'

'Lie still, be strong, to-day: but,
Lord, to-morrow,
What of to-morrow, Lord?
Shall there be rest from toil, be truce
from sorrow,
Be living green upon the sward,
Now but a barren grave to me,
Be joy for sorrow?'—
'Did I not die for thee?
Do I not live for thee? Leave
Me to-morrow.'

24 *December* 1864.

I KNOW YOU NOT

O CHRIST, the Vine with living fruit,
The twelvefold-fruited Tree of Life,
The Balm in Gilead after strife,
The Valley-lily and the Rose;
Stronger than Lebanon Thou Root;
Sweeter than clustered grapes Thou
Vine;
O best, Thou Vineyard of red wine,
Keeping Thy best wine till the
close.

Pearl of great price Thyself alone,
And ruddier than the ruby Thou;
Most precious lightening Jasper
stone,
Head of the corner spurned before:
Fair gate of pearl, Thyself the Door;
Clear golden street, Thyself the Way;
By Thee we journey toward Thee
now,
Through Thee shall enter heaven one
day.

I thirst for Thee, full fount and flood;
My heart calls thine, as deep to
deep:
Dost Thou forget Thy sweat
and pain,
Thy provocation on the cross?
Heart-pierced for me, vouchsafe to
keep
The purchase of Thy lavished Blood:
The gain is Thine, Lord, if I gain;
Or, if I lose, Thine own the
loss.

At midnight, saith the Parable,
A cry was made, the Bridegroom
came;
Those who were ready entered
in:
The rest, shut out in death and
shame,
Strove all too late that feast to
win,
Their die was cast and fixed their
lot;
A gulf divided heaven from hell;
The Bridegroom said—I know you
not.

But Who is this that shuts the door,
And saith—I know you not—to
them?
I see the wounded hands and
side,

The brow thorn-tortured long ago:
Yea, This who grieved and bled and died,
This same is He who must condemn;
He called, but they refused to know;
So now He hears their cry no more.

Circa 1864.

IF ONLY

IF only I might love my God and die!—
But now He bids me love Him and live on,
Now when the bloom of all my life is gone,
The pleasant half of life has quite gone by.
My tree of hope is lopt that spread so high;
And I forget how summer glowed and shone,
While autumn grips me with its fingers wan,
And frets me with its fitful windy sigh.
When autumn passes then must winter numb,
And winter may not pass a weary while.
But when it passes spring shall flower again:
And in that spring who weepeth now shall smile—
Yea, they shall wax who now are on the wane,
Yea, they shall sing for love when Christ shall come.

20 *February* 1865.

LONG BARREN

THOU who didst hang upon a barren tree,
My God, for me;
Though I till now be barren, now at length,
Lord, give me strength
To bring forth fruit to Thee.

Thou who didst bear for me the crown of thorn,
Spitting and scorn;
Though I till now have put forth thorns, yet now
Strengthen me Thou
That better fruit be borne.

Thou Rose of Sharon, Cedar of broad roots,
Vine of sweet fruits,
Thou Lily of the vale with fadeless leaf,
Of thousands Chief,
Feed Thou my feeble shoots.

21 *February* 1865.

YOUNG DEATH

LYING a-dying—
Such sweet things untasted,
Such rare beauties wasted:
Her hair a hidden treasure,
Her voice a lost pleasure:
Her soul made void of passion,
Her body going to nothing
Though long it took to fashion,
Soon to be a loathing.
Her road hath no turning,
Her light is burning burning
With last feeble flashes,
Dying from the birth:

Dust to dust, earth to earth,
Ashes to ashes.
. . . .
Lo in the room, the upper,
She shall sit down to supper,
New-bathed from head to feet
And on Christ gazing:
Her mouth kept clean and sweet
Shall laugh and sing, God praising.
Then shall be no more weeping
Or fear or sorrow,
Or waking more or sleeping
Or night or morrow,
Or cadence in the song
Of saints, or thirst or hunger:
The strong shall rise more strong,
And the young younger.
. . . .

3 *November* 1865.

MOTHER COUNTRY

Oh what is that country
And where can it be,
Not mine own country,
But dearer far to me?
Yet mine own country,
If I one day may see
Its spices and cedars,
Its gold and ivory.

As I lie dreaming,
It rises, that land;
There rises before me
Its green golden strand,
With the bowing cedars
And the shining sand;
It sparkles and flashes
Like a shaken brand.

Do angels lean nearer
While I lie and long?
I see their soft plumage
And catch their windy song,
Like the rise of a high tide
Sweeping full and strong;
I mark the outskirts
Of their reverend throng.

Oh what is a king here,
Or what is a boor?
Here all starve together,
All dwarfed and poor;
Here Death's hand knocketh
At door after door,
He thins the dancers
From the festal floor.

Oh what is a handmaid,
Or what is a queen?
All must lie down together
Where the turf is green,
The foulest face hidden,
The fairest not seen;
Gone as if never
They had breathed or been.

Gone from sweet sunshine
Underneath the sod,
Turned from warm flesh and blood
To senseless clod,
Gone as if never
They had toiled or trod,
Gone out of sight of all
Except our God.

Shut into silence
From the accustomed song,
Shut into solitude
From all earth's throng,
Run down though swift of foot,
Thrust down though strong:
Life made an end of,
Seemed it short or long.

Life made an end of,—
Life but just begun;
Life finished yesterday,
Its last sand run:

Life new-born with the morrow,
Fresh as the sun :
While done is done for ever ;
Undone, undone.

And if that life is life,
This is but a breath,
The passage of a dream
And the shadow of death ;
But a vain shadow
If one considereth ;
Vanity of vanities,
As the Preacher saith.

7 February 1866.

AFTER COMMUNION

Why should I call Thee Lord, Who
art my God ?
Why should I call Thee Friend,
Who art my Love ?
Or King, Who art my very Spouse
above ?
Or call Thy Sceptre on my heart
Thy rod ?
Lo now Thy banner over me is love,
All heaven flies open to me at Thy
nod :
For Thou hast lit Thy flame in me
a clod,
Made me a nest for dwelling of
Thy Dove.
What wilt Thou call me in our
home above,
Who now hast called me friend ?
how will it be
When Thou for good wine
settest forth the best ?
Now Thou dost bid me come and
sup with Thee,
Now Thou dost make me lean
upon Thy breast :
How will it be with me in time of
love ?

23 February 1866.

A CHRISTMAS CAROL

In the bleak mid-winter
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone ;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak mid-winter
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold
Him
Nor earth sustain ;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign :
In the bleak mid-winter
A stable-place sufficed
The Lord God Almighty
Jesus Christ.

Enough for Him, whom cherubim
Worship night and day,
A breastful of milk
And a mangerful of hay ;
Enough for Him, whom angels
Fall down before,
The ox and ass and camel
Which adore.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air ;
But only His mother
In her maiden bliss
Worshipped the Beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give Him.
Poor as I am ?
If I were a shepherd
I would bring a lamb,

If I were a Wise Man
I would do my part,—
Yet what I can I give Him,
Give my heart.

Before 1872.

WRESTLING

Alas my Lord,
How should I wrestle all the live-long night
With Thee my God, my strength and my delight?

How can it need
So agonized an effort and a strain
To make Thy face of mercy shine again?

How can it need
Such wringing out of breathless prayer to move
Thee to Thy wonted love, when Thou art Love?

Yet Abraham
So hung about Thine arm, out-stretcht and bared,
That for ten righteous Sodom had been spared.

Yet Jacob did
So hold Thee by the clenchèd hand of prayer
That he prevailed and Thou didst bless him there.

Elias prayed,
And sealed the founts of heaven: he prayed again,
And lo Thy blessing fell in showers of rain.

Gulpt by the fish
And by the pit, lost Jonah made his moan,
And Thou forgavest, waiting to atone.

All Nineveh
Fasting and girt in sackcloth raised a cry,
Which moved Thee ere the day of grace went by.

Thy Church prayed on
And on for blessed Peter in his strait,
Till opened of its own accord the gate.

Yea Thou my God
Hast prayed all night, and in the garden prayed,
Even while like melting wax Thy strength was made.

Alas for him
Who faints despite Thy pattern, King of Saints!
Alas alas for me the one that faints!

Lord, give us strength
To hold Thee fast until we hear Thy voice,
Which Thine own know who hearing it rejoice.

Lord, give us strength
To hold Thee fast until we see Thy Face,
Full fountain of all rapture and all grace.

But, when our strength
Shall be made darkness, and our bodies clay,
Hold Thou us fast and give us sleep till day.

Before 1875.

THE MASTER IS COME, AND CALLETH FOR THEE

WHO calleth?—Thy Father calleth,
Run, O Daughter, to wait on Him:
He Who chasteneth but for a season
Trims thy lamp that it burn not dim.

Who calleth?—Thy Master calleth,
Sit, Disciple, and learn of Him:
He Who teacheth wisdom of Angels
Makes thee wise as the Cherubim.

Who calleth?—Thy Monarch calleth,
Rise, O Subject, and follow Him:
He is stronger than Death or Devil,
Fear not thou if the foe be grim.

Who calleth?—Thy Lord God calleth,
Fall, O Creature, adoring Him:
He is jealous, thy God Almighty,
Count not dear to thee life or limb.

Who calleth?—Thy Bridegroom calleth,
Soar, O Bride, with the Seraphim:
He Who loves thee as no man loveth
Bids thee give up thy heart to Him.

Before 1876.

'WHEN MY HEART IS VEXED I WILL COMPLAIN'

'O LORD, how canst Thou say Thou lovest me—
Me whom thou settest in a barren land,
Hungry and thirsty on the burning sand,
Hungry and thirsty where no waters be
Nor shadows of date-bearing tree:—
O Lord, how canst Thou say Thou lovest me?'

'I came from Edom by as parched a track,
As rough a track beneath My bleeding feet.
I came from Edom seeking thee, and sweet
I counted bitterness; I turned not back
But counted life as death, and trod
The winepress all alone: and I am God.'

'Yet, Lord, how canst Thou say Thou lovest me?
For Thou art strong to comfort: and could I
But comfort one I love who, like to die,
Lifts feeble hands and eyes that fail to see
In one last prayer for comfort—nay,
I could not stand aside or turn away.'

'Alas thou knowest that for thee I died,
For thee I thirsted with the dying thirst;

I, blessèd, for thy sake was counted curst,
In sight of men and angels crucified:
All this and more I bore to prove
My love, and wilt thou yet mistrust My love?'

'Lord, I am fain to think Thou lovest me,
For Thou art all in all and I am Thine;
And lo Thy love is better than new wine,
And I am sick of love in loving Thee.
But dost Thou love me? Speak and save,
For jealousy is cruel as the grave.'

'Nay, if thy love is not an empty breath,
My love is as thine own—deep answers deep.
Peace, peace: I give to My beloved sleep—
Not death but sleep, for love is strong as death.
Take patience: sweet thy sleep shall be:
Yea thou shalt wake in Paradise with Me.'

Before 1876.

SAINTS AND ANGELS

It's oh in Paradise that I fain would be,
Away from earth and weariness and all beside:
Earth is too full of loss with its dividing sea,
But Paradise upbuilds the bower for the bride.

Where flowers are yet in bud while the boughs are green,
I would get quit of earth and get robed for heaven;
Putting on my raiment white within the screen,
Putting on my crown of gold whose gems are seven.

Fair is the fourfold river that maketh no moan,
Fair are the trees fruit-bearing of the wood,
Fair are the gold and bdellium and the onyx stone,
And I know the gold of that land is good.

O my love, my dove, lift up your eyes
Toward the eastern gate like an opening rose;
You and I who parted will meet in Paradise,
Pass within and sing when the gates unclose.

This life is but the passage of a day,
This life is but a pang and all is over,
But in the life to come which fades not away
Every love shall abide and every lover.

He who wore out pleasure and mastered all lore,
Solomon wrote 'Vanity of vanities':
Down to death, of all that went before
In his mighty long life, the record is this.

With loves by the hundred, wealth beyond measure,
Is this he who wrote 'Vanity of vanities'?
Yea, 'Vanity of vanities' he saith of pleasure,
And of all he learned set his seal to this.

Yet we love and faint not, for our love is one,
And we hope and flag not, for our hope is sure;
Although there be nothing new beneath the sun,
And no help for life and for death no cure.

The road to death is life, the gate of life is death,
We who wake shall sleep, we shall wax who wane;
Let us not vex our souls for stoppage of a breath,
The fall of a river that turneth not again.

Be the road short, and be the gate near,—
Shall a short road tire, a strait gate appall?
The loves that meet in Paradise shall cast out fear,
And Paradise hath room for you and me and all.

Before 1876.

A ROSE PLANT IN JERICHO

At morn I plucked a rose and gave it Thee,
A rose of joy and happy love and peace,
A rose with scarce a thorn:
But in the chillness of a second morn
My rose bush drooped, and all its gay increase
Was but one thorn that wounded me.

I plucked the thorn and offered it to Thee,
And for my thorn Thou gavest love and peace,
Not joy this mortal morn:
If Thou hast given much treasure for a thorn,
Wilt Thou not give me for my rose increase
Of gladness, and all sweets to me?

My thorny rose, my love and pain, to Thee
I offer; and I set my heart in peace,
And rest upon my thorn:
For verily I think to-morrow morn
Shall bring me Paradise, my gift's increase,
Yea, give Thy very Self to me.

Before 1876.

PATIENCE OF HOPE

The flowers that bloom in sun and shade,
And glitter in the dew—
The flowers must fade.
The birds that build their nest and sing
When lovely Spring is new
Must soon take wing.

The sun that rises in his strength,
To wake and warm the world,
Must set at length.
The sea that overflows the shore
With billows frothed and curled
Must ebb once more.

All come and go, all wax and wane,
O Lord, save only Thou,
Who dost remain
The same to all eternity.
All things which fail us now
We trust to Thee.

Circa 1880.

I WILL ARISE

WEARY and weak,—accept my weariness;
Weary and weak and downcast in my soul,
With hope growing less and less,
And with the goal
Distant and dim,—accept my sore distress.
I thought to reach the goal so long ago,
At outset of the race I dreamed of rest,
Not knowing what now I know
Of breathless haste,
Of long-drawn straining effort across the waste.

One only thing I knew, Thy love of me;
One only thing I know, Thy sacred same
Love of me full and free,
A craving flame
Of selfless love of me which burns in Thee.
How can I think of Thee, and yet grow chill?
Of Thee, and yet grow cold and nigh to death?
Re-energize my will,
Rebuild my faith;
I will arise and run, Thou giving me breath.

I will arise, repenting and in pain;
I will arise, and smite upon my breast
And turn to Thee again;
Thou choosest best;
Lead me along the road Thou makest plain.
Lead me a little way, and carry me
A little way, and hearken to my sighs,
And store my tears with Thee,
And deign replies
To feeble prayers;—O Lord, I will arise.

Before 1882.

A PRODIGAL SON

DOES that lamp still burn in my Father's house
Which he kindled the night I went away?
I turned once beneath the cedar boughs,
And marked it gleam with a golden ray;
Did he think to light me home some day?

Hungry here with the crunching swine,
Hungry harvest have I to reap;
In a dream I count my Father's kine,
I hear the tinkling bells of his sheep,
I watch his lambs that browse and leap.

There is plenty of bread at home,
His servants have bread enough and to spare;
The purple wine-fat froths with foam,
Oil and spices make sweet the air,
While I perish hungry and bare.

Rich and blessed those servants, rather
Than I who see not my Father's face!
I will arise and go to my Father:—
'Fallen from sonship, beggared of grace,
Grant me, Father, a servant's place.'

Before 1882.

FOR THINE OWN SAKE, O MY GOD

WEARIED of sinning, wearied of repentance,
Wearied of self, I turn, my God, to Thee;
To Thee, my Judge, on Whose all-righteous sentence
Hangs mine eternity:
I turn to Thee, I plead Thyself with Thee,
Be pitiful to me.

Wearied I loathe myself, I loathe my sinning,
My stains, my festering sores, my misery:
Thou the Beginning, Thou ere my beginning
Didst see and didst foresee
Me miserable, me sinful, ruined me,—
I plead Thyself with Thee.

I plead Thyself with Thee Who art my maker,
Regard Thy handiwork that cries to Thee;
I plead Thyself with Thee Who wast partaker
Of mine infirmity;
Love made Thee what Thou art, the love of me,—
I plead Thyself with Thee.

Before 1882.

UNTIL THE DAY BREAK

WHEN will the day bring its pleasure?
When will the night bring its rest?
Reaper and gleaner and thresher
Peer toward the east and the west:—
The Sower He knoweth, and He knoweth best.

Meteors flash forth and expire,
Northern lights kindle and pale;
These are the days of desire,
Of eyes looking upward that fail;
Vanishing days as a finishing tale.

Bows down the crop in its glory,
Tenfold, fiftyfold, hundredfold;
The millet is ripened and hoary,
The wheat ears are ripened to gold:—
Why keep us waiting in dimness and cold?

The Lord of the harvest, He knoweth
Who knoweth the first and the last:
The Sower Who patiently soweth,
He scanneth the present and past:
He saith, 'What thou hast, what remaineth, hold fast.'

Yet, Lord, o'er Thy toil-wearied weepers
The storm-clouds hang muttering and frown :
On threshers and gleaners and reapers,
O Lord of the harvest, look down ;
Oh for the harvest, the shout, and the crown !

'Not so,' saith the Lord of the reapers,
The Lord of the first and the last :
'O My toilers, My weary, My weepers,
What ye have, what remaineth, hold fast.
Hide in My heart till the vengeance be past.'

Before 1882.

'OF HIM THAT WAS READY TO PERISH'

LORD, I am waiting, weeping, watching for Thee :
My youth and hope lie by me buried and dead,
My wandering love hath not where to lay its head
Except Thou say 'Come to Me.'

My noon is ended, abolished from life and light,
My noon is ended, ended and done away,
My sun went down in the hours that still were day,
And my lingering day is night.

How long, O Lord, how long in my desperate pain
Shall I weep and watch, shall I weep and long for Thee ?
Is Thy grace ended, Thy love cut off from me ?
How long shall I long in vain ?

O God Who before the beginning hast seen the end,
Who hast made me flesh and blood, not frost and not fire,
Who hast filled me full of needs and love and desire
And a heart that craves a friend,—

Who hast said 'Come to Me and I will give thee rest,'
Who hast said 'Take on thee My yoke and learn of Me,'
Who calledst a little child to come to Thee,
And pillowedst John on Thy breast ;

Who spak'st to women that followed Thee sorrowing,
Bidding them weep for themselves and weep for their own ;
Who didst welcome the outlaw adoring Thee all alone,
And plight Thy word as a King,—

By Thy love of these and of all that ever shall be,
By Thy love of these and of all the born and unborn,
Turn Thy gracious eyes on me and think no scorn
Of me, not even of me.

Beside Thy Cross I hang on my cross in shame,
My wounds, weakness, extremity cry to Thee :
Bid me also to Paradise, also me,
For the glory of Thy Name.

Before 1882.

BEHOLD THE MAN

SHALL Christ hang on the Cross, and we not look?
Heaven, earth, and hell, stood gazing at the first,
While Christ for long-cursed man was counted cursed;
Christ, God and Man, Whom God the Father strook
And shamed and sifted and one while forsook:—
Cry shame upon our bodies we have nursed
In sweets, our souls in pride, our spirits immersed
In wilfulness, our steps run all acrook.
Cry shame upon us! for He bore our shame
In agony, and we look on at ease
With neither hearts on flame nor cheeks on flame.
What hast thou, what have I, to do with peace?
Not to send peace but send a sword He came,
And fire and fasts and tearful night watches.

Before 1882.

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS

IS this the Face that thrills with awe
Seraphs who veil their face above?
Is this the Face without a flaw,
The Face that is the Face of Love?
Yea, this defaced, a lifeless clod,
Hath all creation's love sufficed,
Hath satisfied the love of God,
This Face the Face of Jesus Christ.

Before 1882.

IT IS FINISHED

DEAR Lord, let me recount to Thee
Some of the great things Thou hast done
For me, even me
Thy little one.

It was not I that cared for Thee,—
But Thou didst set Thy heart upon
Me, even me
Thy little one.

And therefore was it sweet to Thee
To leave Thy Majesty and Throne,
And grow like me
A Little One,

A swaddled Baby on the knee
Of a dear Mother of Thine own,
Quite weak like me
Thy little one.

Thou didst assume my misery,
And reap the harvest I had sown,
Comforting me
Thy little one.

Jerusalem and Galilee,—
Thy love embraced not those alone,
But also me
Thy little one.

Thy unblemished Body on the Tree
Was bared and broken to atone
For me, for me
Thy little one.

Thou lovedst me upon the Tree,—
Still me, hid by the ponderous stone,—
Me always—me
Thy little one.

And love of me arose with Thee
When death and hell lay overthrown
Thou lovedst me
Thy little one.

And love of me went up with Thee
To sit upon Thy Father's Throne:
Thou lovest me
Thy little one.

Lord, as Thou me, so would I Thee
Love in pure love's communion,
For Thou lov'st me
Thy little one:

Which love of me bring back with Thee
To Judgment when the Trump is blown,
Still loving me
Thy little one.

Before 1882.

AN EASTER CAROL

SPRING bursts to-day,
For Christ is risen and all the earth's at play.

Flash forth, thou Sun,
The rain is over and gone, its work is done.

Winter is past,
Sweet Spring is come at last, is come at last.

Bud, Fig and Vine,
Bud, Olive, fat with fruit and oil and wine.

Break forth this morn
In roses, thou but yesterday a thorn.

Uplift thy head,
O pure white Lily through the Winter dead.

Beside your dams
Leap and rejoice, you merry-making Lambs.

All Herds and Flocks
Rejoice, all Beasts of thickets and of rocks.

Sing, Creatures, sing,
Angels and Men and Birds and everything.

All notes of Doves
Fill all our world: this is the time of loves.

Before 1882.

'BEHOLD A SHAKING'

I

MAN rising to the doom that shall not err,—
Which hath most dread—the arouse of all or each?
All kindreds of all nations of all speech,
Or one by one of *him* and *him* and *her*?
While dust reanimate begins to stir
Here, there, beyond, beyond, reach beyond reach;
While every wave refashions on the beach
Alive or dead-in-life some seafarer.
Now meeting doth not join or parting part;
True meeting and true parting wait till then,
When whoso meet are joined for evermore,

Face answering face and heart at rest in heart:—
God bring us all rejoicing to the shore
Of happy Heaven, His sheep home to the pen.

2

Blessed that flock safe penned in Paradise;
Blessed this flock which tramps in weary ways.
All form one flock, God's flock; all yield Him praise
By joy or pain, still tending toward the prize.
Joy speaks in praises there, and sings and flies
Where no night is, exulting all its days;
Here, pain finds solace, for behold it prays;
In both love lives the life that never dies.
Here life is the beginning of our death,
And death the starting-point whence life ensues;
Surely our life is death, our death is life:
Nor need we lay to heart our peace or strife,
But calm in faith and patience breathe the breath
God gave, to take again when He shall choose.

Before 1882.

ALL SAINTS

THEY are flocking from the East
And the West,
They are flocking from the North
And the South,
Every moment setting forth
From realm of snake or lion,
Swamp or sand,
Ice or burning.
Greatest and least,
Palm in hand
And praise in mouth,
They are flocking up the path
To their rest,
Up the path that hath
No returning.
Up the steeps of Zion
They are mounting,
Coming, coming,
Throngs beyond man's counting:
With a sound
Like innumerable bees
Swarming, humming,
Where flowering trees
Many-tinted,
Many-scented,
All alike abound
With honey,—
With a swell
Like a blast upswaying unrestrainable
From a shadowed dell
To the hill-tops sunny,—
With a thunder
Like the ocean when in strength
Breadth and length
It sets to shore.
More and more
Waves on waves redoubled pour
Leaping flashing to the shore;
Unlike the under
Drain of ebb that loseth ground
For all its roar.

They are thronging
From the East and West,
From the North and South;
Saints are thronging, loving, longing,

To their land
Of rest,
Palm in hand
And praise in mouth.

Before 1882.

'TAKE CARE OF HIM'

'THOU whom I love, for whom I died,
Lovest thou Me, My bride?'—
Low on my knees I love Thee, Lord,
Believed in and adored.

'That I love thee the proof is plain:
How dost thou love again?'—
In prayer, in toil, in earthly loss,
In a long-carried cross.

'Yea, thou dost love: yet one adept
Brings more for Me to accept.'—
I mould my will to match with Thine,
My wishes I resign.

'Thou givest much: then give the whole
For solace of My soul.'—
More would I give, if I could get:
But, Lord, what lack I yet?

'In Me thou lovest Me: I call
Thee to love Me in all.'—
Brim full my heart, dear Lord, that so
My love may overflow.

'Love me in sinners and in saints,
In each who needs or faints.'—
Lord, I will love Thee as I can
In every brother man.

'All sore, all crippled, all who ache,
Tend all for My dear sake.'—
All for Thy sake, Lord: I will see
In every sufferer Thee.

'So I at last, upon My Throne
Of glory, Judge alone,
So I at last will say to thee:
Thou diddest it to Me.'

Before 1882.

A MARTYR

THE VIGIL OF THE FEAST

INNER not outer, without gnash of teeth
Or weeping, save quiet sobs of some who pray
And feel the Everlasting Arms beneath, –
Blackness of darkness this, but not for aye;
Darkness that even in gathering fleeteth fast,
Blackness of blackest darkness close to day.
Lord Jesus, through Thy darkened pillar cast
Thy gracious eyes all-seeing cast on me
Until this tyranny be overpast.
Me, Lord, remember who remember Thee,
And cleave to Thee, and see Thee without sight,
And choose Thee still in dire extremity,
And in this darkness worship Thee my Light,
And Thee my Life adore in shadow of death,
Thee loved by day, and still beloved by night.

It is the Voice of my Beloved that saith :
'I am the Way, the Truth, the Life, I go
Whither that soul knows well that followeth.'
O Lord, I follow, little as I know ;
At this eleventh hour I rise and take
My life into my hand, and follow so,
With tears and heart-misgivings and heart-ache ;
Thy feeblest follower, yet Thy follower
Indomitable for Thine only sake.
To-night I gird my will afresh, and stir
My strength, and brace my heart to do and dare,—
Marvelling : Will to-morrow wake the whirr
Of the great rending wheel, or from his lair
Startle the jubilant lion in his rage,
Or clench the headsman's hand within my hair,
Or kindle fire to speed my pilgrimage,
Chariot of fire and horses of sheer fire
Whirling me home to heaven by one fierce stage ?—
Thy Will I will, I Thy desire desire ;
Let not the waters close above my head,
Uphold me that I sink not in this mire :
For flesh and blood are frail and sore afraid ;
And young I am, unsatisfied and young,
With memories, hopes, with cravings all unfed,
My song half sung, its sweetest notes unsung,
All plans cut short, all possibilities,
Because my cord of life is soon unstrung.
Was I a careless woman set at ease
That this so bitter cup is brimmed for me ?
Had mine own vintage settled on the lees ?
A word, a puff of smoke, would set me free ;
A word, a puff of smoke, over and gone : . . .
Howbeit, whom have I, Lord, in heaven but Thee ?
Yea, only Thee my choice is fixed upon
In heaven or earth, eternity or time :—
Lord, hold me fast, Lord, leave me not alone,
Thy silly heartless dove that sees the lime
Yet almost flutters to the tempting bough :
Cover me, hide me, pluck me from this crime.
A word, a puff of smoke, would save me now : . . .
But who, my God, would save me in the day
Of Thy fierce anger ? only Saviour Thou.
Preoccupy my heart, and turn away
And cover up mine eyes from frantic fear,
And stop mine ears lest I be driven astray :
For one stands ever dinning in mine ear
How my grey Father withers in the blight

Of love for me, who cruel am and dear;
And how my Mother through this lingering night
Until the day sits tearless in her woe,
Loathing for love of me the happy light
Which brings to pass a concourse and a show
To glut the hungry faces merciless,
The thousand faces swaying to and fro,
Feasting on me unveiled in helplessness,
Alone,—yet not alone: Lord, stand by me
As once by lonely Paul in his distress.
As blossoms to the sun I turn to Thee;
Thy dove turns to her window, think no scorn;
As one dove to an ark on shoreless sea,
To Thee I turn mine eyes, my heart forlorn.
Put forth Thy scarred right Hand, kind Lord, take hold
Of me Thine all-forsaken dove who mourn:
For Thou hast loved me since the days of old,
And I love Thee Whom loving I will love
Through life's short fever-fits of heat and cold;
Thy Name will I extol and sing thereof,
Will flee for refuge to Thy Blessed Name.
Lord, look upon me from Thy bliss above:
Look down on me, who shrink from all the shame
And pangs and desolation of my death,
Wrenched piecemeal or devoured or set on flame,
While all the world around me holds its breath
With eyes glued on me for a gazing-stock,
Pitiless eyes, while no man pitieth.
The floods are risen, I stagger in their shock,
My heart reels and is faint, I fail, I faint:
My God, set Thou me up upon the rock,
Thou Who didst long ago Thyself acquaint
With death, our death; Thou Who didst long ago
Pour forth Thy soul for sinner and for saint.
Bear me in mind, whom no one else will know;
Thou Whom Thy friends forsook, take Thou my part,
Of all forsaken in mine overthrow;
Carry me in Thy bosom, in Thy heart,
Carry me out of darkness into light,
To-morrow make me see Thee as Thou art.
Lover and friend Thou hidest from my sight.
Alas, alas, mine earthly love, alas,
For whom I thought to don the garments white
And white wreath of a bride, this rugged pass
Hath utterly divorced me from thy care.
Yea, I am to thee as a shattered glass

Worthless, with no more beauty lodging there,
Abhorred, lest I involve thee in my doom:
For sweet are sunshine and this upper air,
And life and youth are sweet, and give us room
For all most sweetest sweetnesses we taste:
Dear, what hast thou in common with a tomb?
I bow my head in silence, I make haste
Alone, I make haste out into the dark,
My life and youth and hope all run to waste.
Is this my body cold and stiff and stark,
Ashes made ashes, earth becoming earth,
Is this a prize for man to make his mark?
Am I that very I who laughed in mirth
A while ago, a little little while,
Yet all the while a-dying since my birth?
Now am I tired, too tired to strive or smile;
I sit alone, my mouth is in the dust:
Look Thou upon me, Lord, for I am vile.
In Thee is all my hope, is all my trust,
On Thee I centre all my self that dies,
And self that dies not with its mortal crust,
But sleeps and wakes, and in the end will rise
With hymns and hallelujahs on its lips,
Thee loving with the love that satisfies.
As once in Thine unutterable eclipse
The sun and moon grew dark for sympathy,
And earth cowered quaking underneath the drips
Of Thy slow Blood priceless exceedingly,
So now a little spare me, and show forth
Some pity, O my God, some pity of me.
If trouble comes not from the south or north,
But meted to us by Thy tender hand,
Let me not in Thine eyes be nothing worth:
Behold me where in agony I stand,
Behold me no man caring for my soul,
And take me to Thee in the far-off land,
Shorten the race and lift me to the goal.

Before 1882.

WHY?

'LORD, if I love Thee and Thou lovest me,
Why need I any more these toilsome days?
Why should I not run singing up Thy ways
Straight into heaven, to rest myself with Thee?
What need remains of death-pang yet to be,
If all my soul is quickened in Thy praise?
If all my heart loves Thee, what need the amaze,

Struggle and dimness of an agony?'—
'Bride whom I love, if thou too lovest Me,
Thou needs must choose My Likeness for thy dower:
So wilt thou toil in patience, and abide
Hungering and thirsting for that blessed hour
When I My Likeness shall behold in thee,
And thou therein shalt waken satisfied.'

Before 1882.

LOVE IS STRONG AS DEATH

I HAVE not sought Thee, I have not found Thee,
I have not thirsted for Thee:
And now cold billows of death surround me,
Buffeting billows of death astound me,—
Wilt Thou look upon, wilt Thou see
Thy perishing me?'

'Yea, I have sought thee, yea, I have found thee,
Yea, I have thirsted for thee,
Yea, long ago with love's bands I bound thee:
Now the Everlasting Arms surround thee,—
Through death's darkness I look and see
And clasp thee to Me.'

Before 1882.

'IF THOU SAYEST, BEHOLD, WE KNEW IT NOT.'—PROVERBS xxiv. 11, 12.

1

I HAVE done I know not what,—what have I done?
My brother's blood, my brother's soul, doth cry:
And I find no defence, find no reply,
No courage more to run this race I run,
Not knowing what I have done, have left undone;
Ah me, these awful unknown hours that fly,
Fruitless it may be, fleeting fruitless by,
Rank with death-savour underneath the sun!
For what avails it that I did not know
The deed I did? what profits me the plea
That had I known I had not wronged him so?
Lord Jesus Christ, my God, him pity Thou;
Lord, if it may be, pity also me:
In judgment pity, and in death, and now.

2

Thou Who hast borne all burdens, bear our load,
Bear Thou our load whatever load it be;
Our guilt, our shame, our helpless misery,
Bear Thou Who only canst, O God my God.
Seek us and find us, for we cannot Thee

Or seek or find or hold or cleave unto :
We cannot do or undo ; Lord, undo
Our self-undoing, for Thine is the key
Of all we are not though we might have been.
Dear Lord, if ever mercy moved Thy mind,
If so be love of us can move Thee yet,
If still the nail-prints in Thy Hands are seen,
Remember us,—yea how shouldst Thou forget ?
Remember us for good, and seek, and find.

3

Each soul I might have succoured, may have slain,
All souls shall face me at the last Appeal,
That great last moment poised for woe or weal,
That final moment for man's bliss or bane.
Vanity of vanities, yea all is vain
Which then will not avail or help or heal :
Disfeatured faces, worn-out knees that kneel,
Will more avail than strength or beauty then.
Lord, by Thy Passion,—when Thy Face was marred
In sight of earth and hell tumultuous,
And Thy heart failed in Thee like melting wax,
And Thy Blood dropped more precious than the nard,—
Lord, for Thy sake, not ours, supply our lacks,
For Thine own sake, not ours, Christ, pity us.

Before 1882.

THE THREAD OF LIFE

1

THE irresponsive silence of the land,
The irresponsive sounding of the sea,
Speak both one message of one sense to me :—
'Aloof, aloof, we stand aloof ; so stand
Thou too aloof bound with the flawless band
Of inner solitude ; we bind not thee ;
But who from thy self-chain shall set thee free ?
What heart shall touch thy heart ? what hand thy hand ?'—
And I am sometimes proud and sometimes meek,
And sometimes I remember days of old
When fellowship seemed not so far to seek
And all the world and I seemed much less cold,
And at the rainbow's foot lay surely gold,
And hope felt strong and life itself not weak.

2

Thus am I mine own prison. Everything
Around me free and sunny and at ease :

Or if in shadow, in a shade of trees
Which the sun kisses, where the gay birds sing
And where all winds make various murmuring;
Where bees are found, with honey for the bees;
Where sounds are music, and where silences
Are music of an unlike fashioning.
Then gaze I at the merrymaking crew,
And smile a moment and a moment sigh,
Thinking, Why can I not rejoice with you?
But soon I put the foolish fancy by:
I am not what I have nor what I do;
But what I was I am, I am even I.

3

Therefore myself is that one only thing
I hold to use or waste, to keep or give;
My sole possession every day I live,
And still mine own despite Time's winnowing.
Ever mine own, while moons and seasons bring
From crudeness ripeness mellow and sanative;
Ever mine own, till Death shall ply his sieve;
And still mine own, when saints break grave and sing.
And this myself as king unto my King
I give, to Him Who gave Himself for me;
Who gives Himself to me, and bids me sing
A sweet new song of His redeemed set free;
He bids me sing, O Death, where is thy sting?
And sing, O grave, where is thy victory?

Before 1882.

A SICK CHILD'S MEDITATION

PAIN and weariness, aching eyes and head,
Pain and weariness all the day and night:
Yet the pillow's soft on my smooth soft bed,
And fresh air blows in, and mother shades the light.

Thou, O Lord, in pain hadst no pillow soft,
In Thy weary pain, in Thine agony:
But a cross of shame held Thee up aloft
Where Thy very mother could do nought for Thee.

I would gaze on Thee, on Thy patient face;
Make me like Thyself, patient, sweet, at peace;
Make my days all love, and my nights all praise,
Till all days and nights and patient sufferings cease.

Circa 1885.

OUT OF THE DEEP HAVE I CALLED UNTO THEE, O LORD.

(*From before* 1886 *to before* 1893.)

ALONE Lord God, in Whom our trust and peace,
Our love and our desire, glow bright with hope ;
Lift us above this transitory scope
Of earth, these pleasures that begin and cease,
This moon which wanes, these seasons which decrease :
We turn to Thee ; as on an eastern slope
Wheat feels the dawn beneath night's lingering cope,
Bending and stretching sunward ere it sees.
Alone Lord God, we see not yet we know ;
By love we dwell with patience and desire,
And loving so and so desiring pray ;
Thy Will be done in earth as heaven to-day ;
As yesterday it was, to-morrow so ;
Love offering love on love's self-feeding fire.

Before 1893.

SEVEN vials hold Thy wrath : but what can hold
Thy mercy save Thine own Infinitude,
Boundlessly overflowing with all good,
All lovingkindness, all delights untold ?
Thy Love, of each created love the mould ;
Thyself, of all the empty plenitude ;
Heard of at Ephrata, found in the Wood,
For ever One, the Same, and Manifold.
Lord, give us grace to tremble with that dove
Which Ark-bound winged its solitary way
And overpast the Deluge in a day,
Whom Noah's hand pulled in and comforted :
For we who much more hang upon Thy Love
Behold its shadow in the deed he did.

Before 1893.

Where neither rust nor moth doth corrupt.

NERVE us with patience, Lord, to toil or rest,
Toiling at rest on our allotted level ;
Unsnared, unscared by world or flesh or devil,
Fulfilling the good Will of Thy behest :
Not careful here to hoard, not here to revel ;
But waiting for our treasure and our zest
Beyond the fading splendour of the west,
Beyond this deathstruck life and deathlier evil.
Not with the sparrow building here a house :

But with the swallow tabernacling so
As still to poise alert to rise and go
On eager wings with wing-out-speeding wills
Beyond earth's gourds and past her almond boughs,
Past utmost bound of the everlasting hills.

Before 1893.

As the sparks fly upwards.

LORD, grant us wills to trust Thee with such aim
Of hope and passionate craving of desire
That we may mount aspiring, and aspire
Still while we mount; rejoicing in Thy Name,
Yesterday, this day, day by day the Same:
So sparks fly upward scaling heaven by fire,
Still mount and still attain not, yet draw nigher,
While they have being, to their fountain flame.
To saints who mount, the bottomless abyss
Is as mere nothing, they have set their face
Onward and upward toward that blessed place
Where man rejoices with his God, and soul
With soul, in the unutterable kiss
Of peace for every victor at the goal.

Before 1893.

LORD, make us all love all: that when we meet,
Even myriads of earth's myriads, at Thy Bar,
We may be glad as all true lovers are
Who having parted count reunion sweet.
Safe gathered home around Thy blessed Feet,
Come home by different roads from near or far,
Whether by whirlwind or by flaming car,
From pangs or sleep, safe folded round Thy seat.
Oh if our brother's blood cry out at us,
How shall we meet Thee Who hast loved us all,
Thee Whom we never loved, not loving him?
The unloving cannot chant with Seraphim,
Bear harp of gold or palm victorious,
Or face the Vision Beatifical.

Before 1893.

O LORD, I am ashamed to seek Thy Face
As tho' I loved Thee as Thy saints love Thee:
Yet turn from those Thy lovers, look on me,
Disgrace me not with uttermost disgrace;
But pour on me ungracious, pour Thy grace
To purge my heart and bid my will go free,
Till I too taste Thy hidden Sweetness, see

Thy hidden Beauty in the holy place.
O Thou Who callest sinners to repent,
Call me Thy sinner unto penitence,
For many sins grant me the greater love:
Set me above the waterfloods, above
Devil and shifting world and fleshly sense,
Thy Mercy's all-amazing monument.

Before 1893.

IT is not death, O Christ, to die for Thee:
Nor is that silence of a silent land
Which speaks Thy praise so all may understand:
Darkness of death makes Thy dear lovers see
Thyself Who Wast and Art and Art to Be;
Thyself, more lovely than the lovely band
Of saints who worship Thee on either hand,
Loving and loved thro' all eternity.
Death is not death, and therefore do I hope:
Nor silence silence; and I therefore sing
A very humble hopeful quiet psalm,
Searching my heart-field for an offering;
A handful of sun-courting heliotrope,
Of myrrh a bundle, and a little balm.

Before 1893.

LORD, grant us eyes to see and ears to hear,
And souls to love and minds to understand,
And steadfast faces toward the Holy Land,
And confidence of hope, and filial fear,
And citizenship where Thy saints appear
Before Thee heart in heart and hand in hand,
And Alleluias where their chanting band
As waters and as thunders fill the sphere.
Lord, grant us what Thou wilt, and what Thou wilt
Deny, and fold us in Thy peaceful fold:
Not as the world gives, give to us Thine own:
Inbuild us where Jerusalem is built
With walls of jasper and with streets of gold,
And Thou Thyself, Lord Christ, for Corner Stone.

Before 1893.

'Cried out with Tears.'

LORD, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief:
Lord, I repent, help mine impenitence:
Hide not Thy Face from me, nor spurn me hence,
Nor utterly despise me in my grief;
Nor say me nay, who worship with the thief
Bemoaning my so long lost innocence:—

Ah me! my penitence a fresh offence,
Too tardy and too tepid and too brief.
Lord, must I perish, I who look to Thee?
Look Thou upon me, bid me live, not die;
Say 'Come,' say not 'Depart,' tho' Thou art just:
Yea, Lord, be mindful how out of the dust
I look to Thee while Thou dost look on me,
Thou Face to face with me and Eye to eye.

Before 1893.

O LORD, on Whom we gaze and dare not gaze,
Increase our faith that gazing we may see,
And seeing love, and loving worship Thee
Thro' all our days, our long and lengthening days.
O Lord, accessible to prayer and praise,
Kind Lord, Companion of the two or three,
Good Lord, be gracious to all men and me,
Lighten our darkness and amend our ways.
Call up our hearts to Thee, that where Thou art
Our treasure and our heart may dwell at one:
Then let the pallid moon pursue her sun,
So long as it shall please Thee, far apart,—
Yet art Thou with us, Thou to Whom we run,
We hand in hand with Thee and heart in heart.

Before 1893.

'I will come and heal him.'

O LORD God, hear the silence of each soul,
Its cry unutterable of ruth and shame,
Its voicelessness of self-contempt and blame:
Nor suffer harp and palm and aureole
Of multitudes who praise Thee at the goal
To set aside Thy poor and blind and lame;
Nor blazing Seraphs utterly to outflame
The spark that flies up from each earthly coal.
My price Thy priceless Blood; and therefore I
Price of Thy priceless Blood am precious so
That good things love me in their love of Thee:
I comprehend not why Thou lovedst me
With Thy so mighty Love; but this I know,
No man hath greater love than thus to die.

Before 1893.

AH Lord, Lord, if my heart were right with Thine
As Thine with mine, then should I rest resigned,
Awaiting knowledge with a quiet mind

Because of heavenly wisdom's anodyne.
Then would Thy Love be more to me than wine,
Then should I seek being sure at length to find,
Then should I trust to Thee all humankind
Because Thy Love of them is more than mine.
Then should I stir up hope and comfort me
Remembering Thy Cradle and Thy Cross;
How Heaven to Thee without us had been loss,
How Heaven with us is Thy one only Heaven,
Heaven shared with us thro' all eternity,
With us long sought, long loved, and much forgiven.

Before 1893.

The gold of that land is good.

I LONG for joy, O Lord, I long for gold,
I long for all Thou profferest to me,
I long for the unimagined manifold
Abundance laid up in Thy treasury.
I long for pearls, but not from mundane sea;
I long for palms, but not from earthly mould;
Yet in all else I long for, long for Thee,
Thyself to hear and worship and behold.
For Thee, beyond the splendour of that day
Where all is day and is not any night;
For Thee, beyond refreshment of that rest
To which tired saints press on for its delight:—
Or if not thus for Thee, yet Thee I pray
To make me long so till Thou make me blest.

Before 1893.

WEIGH all my faults and follies righteously,
Omissions and commissions, sin on sin;
Make deep the scale, O Lord, to weigh them in;
Yea, set the Accuser vulture-eyed to see
All loads ingathered which belong to me:
That so in life the judgement may begin,
And Angels learn how hard it is to win
One solitary sinful soul to Thee.
I have no merits for a counterpoise:
Oh vanity my work and hastening day,
What can I answer to the accusing voice?
Lord, drop Thou in the counter-scale alone
One Drop from Thine own Heart, and overweigh
My guilt, my folly, even my heart of stone.

Before 1886.

LORD, grant me grace to love Thee in my pain,
Thro' all my disappointment love Thee still,

Thy love my strong foundation
and my hill,
Tho' I be such as cometh not
again,
A fading leaf, a spark upon the
wane :
So evermore do Thou Thy perfect
Will,
Beloved thro' all my good, thro'
all mine ill,
Beloved tho' all my love beside be
vain.
If thus I love Thee, how wilt Thou
love me,
Thou Who art greater than my
heart ? (Amen !)
Wilt Thou bestow a part, with-
hold a part ?
The longing of my heart cries out
to Thee,
The hungering thirsting longing
of my heart :
What I forewent wilt Thou not
grant me then ?

Before 1886.

LORD, make me one with Thine own
faithful ones,
Thy Saints who love Thee and
are loved by Thee ;
Till the day break and till the
shadows flee,
At one with them in alms and
orisons ;
At one with him who toils and him
who runs,
And him who yearns for union
yet to be ;
At one with all who throng the
crystal sea
And wait the setting of our moons
and suns.
Ah my belovèd ones gone on before,
Who looked not back with hand
upon the plough !
If beautiful to me while still in
sight,
How beautiful must be your
aspects now ;
Your unknown, well-known
aspects in that light
Which clouds shall never cloud for
evermore.

Before 1893.

Light of Light.

O CHRIST our Light, Whom even
in darkness we
(So we look up) discern and gaze
upon,
O Christ, Thou loveliest Light
that ever shone,
Thou Light of Light, Fount of all
lights that be,
Grant us clear vision of Thy Light
to see,
Tho' other lights elude us, or
be gone
Into the secret of oblivion,
Or gleam in places higher than
man's degree.
Who looks on Thee looks full on his
desire,
Who looks on Thee looks full on
Very Love :
Looking, he answers well,
'What lack I yet ?'
His heat and cold wait not on earthly
fire,
His wealth is not of earth to
lose or get ;
Earth reels, but he has stored his
store above.

Before 1893.

GIFTS AND GRACES

(*From before* 1886 *to before* 1893.)

LOVE loveth Thee, and wisdom loveth Thee;
The love that loveth Thee sits satisfied;
Wisdom that loveth Thee grows million-eyed,
Learning what was, and is, and is to be.
Wisdom and love are glad of all they see;
Their heart is deep, their hope is not denied;
They rock at rest on time's unresting tide,
And wait to rest thro' long eternity.
Wisdom and love and rest, each holy soul
Hath these to-day while day is only night:
What shall souls have when morning brings to light
Love, wisdom, rest, God's treasure stored above?
Palm shall they have, and harp and aureole,
Wisdom, rest, love—and lo! the whole is love.

Before 1893.

LORD, give me love that I may love Thee much,
Yea, give me love that I may love Thee more,
And all for love may worship and adore
And touch Thee with love's consecrated touch.
I halt to-day; be love my cheerful crutch,
My feet to plod, some day my wings to soar:
Some day; but, Lord, not any day before
Thou call me perfect, having made me such.
This is a day of love, a day of sorrow,
Love tempering sorrow to a sort of bliss;
A day that shortens while we call it long:
A longer day of love will dawn to-morrow,
A longer, brighter, lovelier day than this,
Endless, all love, no sorrow, but a song.

Before 1893.

'As a king, . . . unto the King.'

LOVE doth so grace and dignify
That beggars treat as king with king
Before the Throne of God most High:
Love recognizes love's own cry,
And stoops to take love's offering.

A loving heart, tho' soiled and bruised;
A kindling heart, tho' cold before;
Who ever came and was refused
By Love? Do, Lord, as Thou art used
To do, and make me love Thee more.

Before 1886.

O YE who love to-day,
Turn away
From Patience with her silver ray:

For Patience shows a twilight face,
Like a half-lighted moon
When daylight dies apace.

But ye who love to-morrow,
Beg or borrow
To-day some bitterness of sorrow :
For Patience shows a lustrous face,
In depth of night her noon ;
Then to her sun gives place.
Before 1893.

LIFE that was born to-day
Must make no stay
But tend to end
As blossom-bloom of May.
O Lord, confirm my root,
Train up my shoot,
To live and give
Harvest of wholesome fruit.

Life that was born to die
Sets heart on high,
And counts and mounts
Steep stages of the sky.
Two things, Lord, I desire
And I require ;
Love's name, and flame
To wrap my soul in fire.

Life that was born to love
Sends heart above
Both cloud and shroud,
And broods a peaceful dove.
Two things I ask of Thee ;
Deny not me ;
Eyesight and light
Thy Blessed Face to see.
Before 1893.

Perfect Love casteth out Fear.

LORD, give me blessed fear,
And much more blessed love,
That fearing I may love Thee here
And be Thy harmless dove :

Until Thou cast out fear,
Until Thou perfect love,
Until Thou end mine exile here
And fetch Thee home Thy dove.
Before 1893.

HOPE is the counterpoise of fear
While night enthralls us here.

Fear hath a startled eye that holds a tear :
Hope hath an upward glance, for dawn draws near
With sunshine and with cheer.
Fear gazing earthwards spies a bier ;
And sets herself to rear
A lamentable tomb where leaves drop sere,
Bleaching to congruous skeletons austere :
Hope chants a funeral hymn most sweet and clear,
And seems true chanticleer
Of resurrection and of all things dear
In the oncoming endless year.

Fear ballasts hope, hope buoys up fear,
And both befit us here.
Before 1893.

Subject to like Passions as we are.

WHOSO hath anguish is not dead in sin,
Whoso hath pangs of utterless desire.
Like as in smouldering flax which harbours fire,—

Red heat of conflagration may begin,
Melt that hard heart, burn out the dross within,
Permeate with glory the new man entire,
Crown him with fire, mould for his hands a lyre
Of fiery strings to sound with those who win.
Anguish is anguish, yet potential bliss,
Pangs of desire are birth-throes of delight;
Those citizens felt such who walk in white,
And meet, but no more sunder, with a kiss;
Who fathom still-unfathomed mysteries,
And love, adore, rejoice, with all their might.
Before 1893.

EXPERIENCE bows a sweet contented face,
Still setting-to her seal that God is true:
Beneath the sun, she knows, is nothing new;
All things that go return with measured pace,
Winds, rivers, man's still recommencing race:—
While Hope beyond earth's circle strains her view,
Past sun and moon, and rain and rainbow too,
Enamoured of unseen eternal grace.
Experience saith, 'My God doth all things well':
And for the morrow taketh little care,
Such peace and patience garrison her soul:—
While Hope, who never yet hath eyed the goal,
With arms flung forth, and backward-floating hair,
Touches, embraces, hugs the invisible.
Before 1893.

Charity never faileth.

SUCH is Love, it comforts in extremity,
Tho' a tempest rage around and rage above,
Tempest beyond tempest, far as eye can see:
Such is Love

That it simply heeds its mourning inward Dove;
Dove which craves contented for a home to be
Set amid the myrtles of an olive grove.

Dove-eyed Love contemplates the Twelve-fruited Tree,
Marks the bowing palms which worship as they move;
Simply sayeth, simply prayeth, 'All for me!'
Such is Love.
Before 1893.

The Greatest of these is Charity.

A MOON impoverished amid stars curtailed,
A sun of its exuberant lustre shorn,
A transient morning that is scarcely morn,
A lingering night in double dimness veiled,—

Our hands are slackened and our strength has failed :
We born to darkness, wherefore were we born ?
No ripening more for olive, grape, or corn :
Faith faints, hope faints, even love himself has paled.
Nay ! love lifts up a face like any rose
Flushing and sweet above a thorny stem,
Softly protesting that the way he knows ;
And as for faith and hope, will carry them
Safe to the gate of New Jerusalem,
Where light shines full and where the palm-tree blows.

Before 1893.

ALL beneath the sun hasteth,
All that hath begun wasteth ;
Earth-notes change in tune
With the changeful moon,
Which waneth
While earth's chant complaineth.

Plumbs the deep, Fear descending ;
Scales the steep, Hope ascending ;
Faith betwixt the twain
Plies both goad and rein,
Half fearing,
All hopeful, day is nearing.

Before 1893.

IF thou be dead, forgive and thou shalt live ;
If thou hast sinned, forgive and be forgiven ;
God waiteth to be gracious and forgive,
And open heaven.

Set not thy will to die and not to live ;
Set not thy face as flint refusing heaven ;
Thou fool, set not thy heart on hell : forgive
And be forgiven.

Before 1893.

Let Patience have her perfect work.

CAN man rejoice who lives in hourly fear ?
Can man make haste who toils beneath a load ?
Can man feel rest who has no fixed abode ?
All he lays hold of, or can see or hear,
Is passing by, is prompt to disappear,
Is doomed, foredoomed, continueth in no stay :
This day he breathes in is his latter day,
This year of time is this world's latter year.
Thus in himself is he most miserable :
Out of himself, Lord, lift him up to Thee,
Out of himself and all these worlds that flee ;
Hold him in patience underneath the rod,
Anchor his hope beyond life's ebb and swell,
Perfect his patience in the love of God.

Before 1893.

PATIENCE must dwell with Love, for Love and Sorrow
Have pitched their tent together here:
Love all alone will build a house to-morrow,
And Sorrow not be near.

To-day for Love's sake hope; still hope in Sorrow,
Rest in her shade and hold her dear.
To-day she nurses thee; and lo to-morrow
Love only will be near.

Before 1893.

Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.

ALL that we see rejoices in the sunshine,
All that we hear makes merry in the Spring:
God grant us such a mind to be glad after our kind,
And to sing
His praises evermore for everything.

Much that we see must vanish with the sunshine,
Sweet Spring must fail, and fail the choir of Spring:
But Wisdom shall burn on when the lesser lights are gone,
And shall sing
God's praises evermore for everything.

Before 1893.

WHAT is the beginning? Love.
What the course? Love still.
What the goal? The goal is Love on the happy hill.
Is there nothing then but Love, search we sky or earth?
There is nothing out of Love hath perpetual worth:
All things flag but only Love, all things fail or flee;
There is nothing left but Love worthy you and me.

Before 1893.

LORD, make me pure:
Only the pure shall see Thee as Thou art,
And shall endure.
Lord, bring me low;
For Thou wert lowly in Thy blessed heart:
Lord, keep me so.

Before 1893.

LOVE, to be love, must walk Thy way
And work Thy Will;
Or if Thou say 'Lie still,'
Lie still and pray.

Love, Thine own Bride, with all her might
Will follow Thee,
And till the shadows flee
Keep Thee in sight.

Love will not mar her peaceful face
With cares undue,
Faithless and hopeless too
And out of place.

Love, knowing Thou much more art Love,
Will sun her grief,
And pluck her myrtle-leaf,
And be Thy dove.

Love here hath vast beatitude:
What shall be hers
Where there is no more curse,
But all is good?
Before 1893.

LORD, I am feeble and of mean account:
Thou Who dost condescend as well as mount,
Stoop Thou Thyself to me
And grant me grace to hear and grace to see.

Lord, if Thou grant me grace to hear and see
Thy very Self Who stoopest thus to me,
I make but slight account
Of aught beside wherein to sink or mount.
Before 1893.

TUNE me, O Lord, into one harmony
With Thee, one full responsive vibrant chord;
Unto Thy praise, all love and melody,
Tune me, O Lord.

Thus need I flee nor death nor fire nor sword:
A little while these be, then cease to be;
And sent by Thee not these should be abhorred.
Devil and world gird me with strength to flee,
To flee the flesh, and arm me with Thy word:
As Thy Heart is to my heart, unto Thee
Tune me, O Lord.
Before 1893.

They shall be as white as snow.

WHITENESS most white. Ah to be clean again
In mine own sight and God's most holy sight!
To reach thro' any flood or fire of pain
Whiteness most white:

To learn to hate the wrong and love the right
Even while I walk thro' shadows that are vain,
Descending thro' vain shadows into night.

Lord, not to-day: yet some day bliss for bane
Give me, for mortal frailty give me might,
Give innocence for guilt, and for my stain
Whiteness most white.
Before 1893.

THY lilies drink the dew,
Thy lambs the rill, and I will drink them too;
For those in purity
And innocence are types, dear Lord, of Thee.
The fragrant lily flower

Bows and fulfils Thy Will its lifelong hour;
The lamb at rest and play
Fulfils Thy Will in gladness all the day;
They leave to-morrow's cares
Until the morrow, what it brings it bears.
And I, Lord, would be such;
Not high or great or anxious overmuch,
But pure and temperate,
Earnest to do Thy Will betimes and late,
Fragrant with love and praise
And innocence thro' all my appointed days;
Thy lily I would be,
Spotless and sweet, Thy lamb to follow Thee.

Before 1886.

When I was in trouble I called upon the Lord.

A BURDENED heart that bleeds and bears
And hopes and waits in pain,
And faints beneath its fears and cares,
Yet hopes again:

Wilt Thou accept the heart I bring,
O gracious Lord and kind,
To ease it of a torturing sting,
And staunch and bind?

Alas, if Thou wilt none of this,
None else have I to give:
Look Thou upon it as it is,
Accept, relieve.

Or if Thou wilt not yet relieve,
Be not extreme to sift;
Accept a faltering will to give,
Itself Thy gift.

Before 1886.

GRANT us such grace that we may work Thy Will
And speak Thy words and walk before Thy Face,
Profound and calm, like waters deep and still:
Grant us such grace.

Not hastening and not loitering in our pace
For gloomiest valley or for sultriest hill,
Content and fearless on our downward race.

As rivers seek a sea they cannot fill
But are themselves filled full in its embrace,
Absorbed, at rest, each river and each rill:
Grant us such grace.

Before 1893.

Who hath despised the day of small things?

As violets so be I recluse and sweet,
Cheerful as daisies unaccounted rare,
Still sunward-gazing from a lowly seat,
Still sweetening wintry air.

While half-awakened Spring lags incomplete,
While lofty forest trees tower bleak and bare,

Daisies and violets own remotest heat
And bloom and make them fair.
Before 1893.

'Do this, and he doeth it.'

CONTENT to come, content to go,
Content to wrestle or to race,
Content to know or not to know,
Each in his place;

Lord, grant us grace to love Thee so
That glad of heart and glad of face
At last we may sit, high or low,
Each in his place;

Where pleasures flow as rivers flow,
And loss has left no barren trace,
And all that are are perfect so,
Each in his place.
Before 1893.

'That no man take thy Crown.'

BE faithful unto death. Christ proffers thee
Crown of a life that draws immortal breath:
To thee He saith, yea and He saith to me,
'Be faithful unto death.'

To every living soul that same He saith,
'Be faithful': — whatsoever else we be,
Let us be faithful, challenging His faith.

Tho' trouble storm around us like the sea,
Tho' hell surge up to scare us and to scathe,
Tho' heaven and earth betake themselves to flee,
'Be faithful unto death.'
Before 1893.

Ye are come unto Mount Sion.

FEAR, Faith, and Hope, have sent their hearts above:
Prudence, Obedience, and Humility,
Climb at their call, all scaling heaven toward Love.
Fear hath least grace but great expediency;
Faith and Humility show grave and strong;
Prudence and Hope mount balanced equally.
Obedience marches marshalling their throng,
Goes first, goes last, to left hand or to right;
And all the six uplift a pilgrim's song.
By day they rest not, nor they rest by night:
While Love within them, with them, over them,
Weans them and woos them from the dark to light.
Each plies for staff not reed with broken stem,
But olive branch in pledge of patient peace;
Till Love being theirs in New Jerusalem
Transfigure them to Love, and so they cease.
Love is the sole beatitude above:
All other graces, to their vast increase
Of glory, look on Love and mirror Love.
Before 1893.

Sit down in the lowest room.

LORD, give me grace
To take the lowest place ;
Nor even desire,
Unless it be Thy Will, to go up higher.
Except by grace,
I fail of lowest place ;
Except desire
Sit low, it aims awry to go up higher.
Before 1893.

Lord, it is good for us to be here.

GRANT us, O Lord, that patience and that faith :
Faith's patience imperturbable in Thee,
Hope's patience till the long-drawn shadows flee,
Love's patience unresentful of all scathe.
Verily we need patience breath by breath ;
Patience while Faith holds up her glass to see,
While Hope toils yoked in Fear's copartnery,
And Love goes softly on the way to death.
How gracious and how perfecting a grace
Must Patience be on which those others wait :
Faith with suspended rapture in her face,
Hope pale and careful hand in hand with Fear,
Love—ah good Love who would not antedate
God's Will, but saith, Good is it to be here.
Before 1893.

LORD, grant us grace to rest upon Thy word,
To rest in hope until we see Thy Face ;
To rest thro' toil unruffled and unstirred,
Lord, grant us grace.

This burden and this heat wear on apace :
Night comes, when sweeter than night's singing bird
Will swell the silence of our ended race.

Ah songs which flesh and blood have never heard
And cannot hear, songs of the silent place
Where rest remains ! Lord, slake our hope deferred,
Lord, grant us grace !
Before 1893.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

I

WHOSO hears a chiming for Christmas at the nighest
Hears a sound like Angels chanting in their glee,
Hears a sound like palm boughs waving in the highest,
Hears a sound like ripple of a crystal sea.

Sweeter than a prayer-bell for a saint in dying,
Sweeter than a death-bell for a saint at rest,
Music struck in Heaven with earth's faint replying,
'Life is good, and death is good, for Christ is Best.'

2

A holy heavenly chime
Rings fulness in of time,
And on His Mother's breast
Our Lord God ever-Blest
Is laid a Babe at rest.

Stoop, Spirits unused to stoop,
Swoop, Angels, flying swoop,
Adoring as you gaze,
Uplifting hymns of praise :—
'Grace to the Full of Grace!'

The cave is cold and strait
To hold the angelic state :
More strait it is, more cold,
To foster and infold
Its Maker one hour old.

Thrilled through with awestruck love,
Meek Angels poised above,
To see their God, look down :
'What, is there never a Crown
For Him in swaddled gown?

'How comes He soft and weak
With such a tender cheek,
With such a soft small hand?—
The very Hand which spann'd
Heaven when its girth was plann'd.

'How comes He with a voice
Which is but baby-noise?—
That Voice which spake with might
"Let there be light"—and light
Sprang out before our sight.

'What need hath He of flesh
Made flawless now afresh?
What need of human heart?—
Heart that must bleed and smart,
Choosing the better part.

'But see : His gracious smile
Dismisses us a while
To serve Him in His kin.
Haste we, make haste, begin
To fetch His brethren in.'

Like stars they flash and shoot,
The Shepherds they salute :
'Glory to God' they sing :
'Good news of peace we bring,
For Christ is born a King.'

3

Lo! newborn Jesus
Soft and weak and small,
Wrapped in baby's bands
By His Mother's hands,
Lord God of all.

Lord God of Mary,
Whom His Lips caress
While He rocks to rest
On her milky breast
In helplessness.

Lord God of shepherds
Flocking through the cold,
Flocking through the dark
To the only Ark,
The only Fold.

Lord God of all things
Be they near or far,
Be they high or low ;
Lord of storm and snow,
Angel and star.

Lord God of all men,—
My Lord and my God!
Thou who lovest me,
Keep me close to Thee
By staff and rod.

Lo! newborn Jesus
Loving great and small,
Love's free Sacrifice,
Opening Arms and Eyes
To one and all.

Circa 1887.

A HOPE CAROL

A NIGHT was near, a day was near;
Between a day and night
I heard sweet voices calling clear,
Calling me:
I heard a whirr of wing on wing,
But could not see the sight;
I long to see the birds that sing,
I long to see.

Below the stars, beyond the moon,
Between the night and day,
I heard a rising falling tune
Calling me:
I long to see the pipes and strings
Whereon such minstrels play;
I long to see each face that sings,
I long to see.

To-day or may be not to-day,
To-night or not to-night,
All voices that command or pray,
Calling me,
Shall kindle in my soul such fire
And in my eyes such light
That I shall see that heart's desire
I long to see.

Before 1889.

CARDINAL NEWMAN

In the grave whither thou goest.

O WEARY Champion of the Cross, lie still:
Sleep thou at length the all-embracing sleep:
Long was thy sowing-day, rest now and reap:
Thy fast was long, feast now thy spirit's fill.
Yea take thy fill of love, because thy will
Chose love not in the shallows but the deep:
Thy tides were spring-tides, set against the neap
Of calmer souls: thy flood rebuked their rill.
Now night has come to thee—please God, of rest:
So some time must it come to every man;
To first and last, where many last are first.
Now fixed and finished thine eternal plan,
Thy best has done its best, thy worst its worst:
Thy best its best, please God, thy best its best.

16 *August* 1890.

YEA I HAVE A GOODLY HERITAGE

MY vineyard that is mine I have to keep,
Pruning for fruit the pleasant twigs and leaves.

Tend thou thy cornfield: one day thou shalt reap
In joy thy ripened sheaves.

Or, if thine be an orchard, graft and prop
Food-bearing trees each watered in its place:
Or, if a garden, let it yield for crop
Sweet herbs and herb of grace.—

But if my lot be sand where nothing grows?—
Nay who hath said it? Tune a thankful psalm:
For, though thy desert bloom not as the rose,
It yet can rear thy palm.

Circa 1890.

A CANDLEMAS DIALOGUE

'Love brought Me down: and cannot love make thee
Carol for joy to Me?
Hear cheerful robin carol from his tree,
Who owes not half to Me
I won for thee.'

'Yea, Lord, I hear his carol's wordless voice;
And well may he rejoice
Who hath not heard of death's discordant noise.
So might I too rejoice
With such a voice.'

'True, thou hast compassed death: but hast not thou
The tree of life's own bough?
Am I not Life and Resurrection now?
My Cross, balm-bearing bough
For such as thou.'

'Ah me, Thy Cross!——but that seems far away;
Thy Cradle-song to-day
I too would raise and worship Thee and pray:
Not empty, Lord, to-day
Send me away.'

'If thou wilt not go empty, spend thy store;
And I will give thee more,
Yea, make thee ten times richer than before.
Give more and give yet more
Out of thy store.'

'Because Thou givest me Thyself, I will
Thy blessed word fulfil,
Give with both hands, and hoard by giving still:
Thy pleasure to fulfil,
And work Thy Will.'

Before 1891.

MARY MAGDALENE AND THE OTHER MARY

A SONG FOR ALL MARIES

Our Master lies asleep and is at rest:
His Heart has ceased to bleed, His Eye to weep:
The sun ashamed has dropt down in the west:
Our Master lies asleep.

Now we are they who weep, and trembling keep
Vigil, with wrung heart in a sighing breast,
While slow time creeps, and slow the shadows creep.

Renew Thy youth, as eagle from the nest;
O Master, who hast sown, arise to reap:—
No cock-crow yet, no flush on eastern crest:
Our Master lies asleep.

Before 1891.

A DEATH OF A FIRST-BORN

(14 *January* 1892.)

ONE young life lost, two happy young lives blighted,
With earthward eyes we see:
With eyes uplifted, keener, farther-sighted,
We look, O Lord, to Thee.

Grief hears a funeral knell: Hope hears the ringing
Of birthday bells on high;
Faith, Hope, and Love, make answer with soft singing,
Half carol and half cry.

Stoop to console us, Christ, sole consolation,
While dust returns to dust;
Until that blessed day when all Thy nation
Shall rise up of the Just.

January 1892.

FAINT YET PURSUING

1

BEYOND this shadow and this turbulent sea,
Shadow of death and turbulent sea of death,
Lies all we long to have or long to be.
Take heart, tired man, toil on with lessening breath,
Lay violent hands on heaven's high treasury,
Be what you long to be through life-long scathe.
A little while Hope leans on Charity,
A little while Charity heartens Faith:
A little while: and then what further while?
One while that ends not and that wearies not,
For ever new whilst evermore the same.
All things made new bear each a sweet new name;
Man's lot of death has turned to life his lot,
And tearful Charity to Love's own smile.

2

Press onward, quickened souls, who mounting move,
Press onward, upward, fire with mounting fire;
Gathering volume of untold desire,

Press upward, homeward, dove with
mounting dove.
Point me the excellent way that
leads above;
Woo me with sequent will, me
too to aspire;
With sequent heart to follow
higher and higher,
To follow all who follow on to
Love.
Up the high steep, across the golden
sill,
Up out of shadows into very
light,
Up out of dwindling life to life
aglow,
I watch you, my beloved, out of
sight;—
Sight fails me, and my heart is
watching still:
My heart fails, yet I follow on
to know.

Circa 1892.

THE WORLD. SELF-DESTRUCTION

(*Before* 1893.)

A vain Shadow.

THE world, — what a world, ah
me!
Mouldy, worm-eaten, grey:
Vain as a leaf from a tree,
As a fading day,
As veriest vanity,
As the froth and the spray
Of the hollow-billowed sea,
As what was and shall not be,
As what is and passes away.

Lord, save us, we perish.

O LORD, seek us, O Lord, find us
In Thy patient care;
Be Thy Love before, behind us,
Round us, everywhere:
Lest the god of this world blind us,
Lest he speak us fair,
Lest he forge a chain to bind us,
Lest he bait a snare.
Turn not from us, call to mind us,
Find, embrace us, bear;
Be Thy Love before, behind us,
Round us, everywhere.

WHAT is this above thy head,
O Man?—
The World, all overspread
With pearls and golden rays
And gems ablaze;
A sight which day and night
Fills an eye's span.

What is this beneath thy feet,
O Saint?—
The World, a nauseous sweet
Puffed up and perishing;
A hollow thing,
A lie, a vanity,
Tinsel and paint.

What is she while time is
time,
O Man?—
In a perpetual prime
Beauty and youth she hath;
And her footpath
Breeds flowers thro' dancing hours
Since time began.

While time lengthens what is she,
O Saint?—
Nought: yea, all men shall see
How she is nought at all,
When her death-pall
Of fire ends their desire
And brands her taint.

Ah poor Man, befooled and slow
And faint!
Ah poorest Man, if so
Thou turn thy back on bliss
And choose amiss!
For thou art choosing now:
Sinner,—or Saint.

Babylon the Great.

FOUL is she and ill-favoured, set askew:
Gaze not upon her till thou dream her fair,
Lest she should mesh thee in her wanton hair,
Adept in arts grown old yet ever new.
Her heart lusts not for love, but thro' and thro'
For blood, as spotted panther lusts in lair;
No wine is in her cup, but filth is there
Unutterable, with plagues hid out of view.
Gaze not upon her, for her dancing whirl
Turns giddy the fixed gazer presently:
Gaze not upon her, lest thou be as she
When, at the far end of her long desire,
Her scarlet vest and gold and gem and pearl
And she amid her pomp are set on fire.

Standing afar off for the fear of her torment.

Is this the end? is there no end but this?
Yea, none beside:
No other end for pride
And foulness and besottedness.

Hath she no friend? hath she no clinging friend?
Nay, none at all;
Who stare upon her fall
Quake for themselves with hair on end.

Will she be done away? vanish away?
Yea, like a dream;
Yea, like the shades that seem
Somewhat, and lo are nought by day.

Alas for her amid man's helpless moan,
Alas for her!
She hath no comforter:
In solitude of fire she sits alone.

O Lucifer, Son of the Morning!

O FALLEN star! a darkened light,
A glory hurtled from its car,
Self-blasted from the holy height:
O fallen star!

Fallen beyond earth's utmost bar,
Beyond return, beyond far sight
Of outmost glimmering nebular.

Now blackness, which once walked
in white;
Now death, whose life once glowed
afar;
O son of dawn that loved the night,
O fallen star!

ALAS, alas! for the self-destroyed
Vanish as images from a glass,
Sink down and die down by hope
unbuoyed:—
Alas, alas!

Who shall stay their ruinous
mass?
Besotted, reckless, possessed, de-
coyed,
They hurry to the dolorous pass.

Saints fall a-weeping who would
have joyed,
Sore they weep for a glory that
was,
For a fulness emptied into the void,
Alas, alas!

As froth on the face of the deep,
As foam on the crest of the sea,
As dreams at the waking of sleep,
As gourd of a day and a night,
As harvest that no man shall reap,
As vintage that never shall be,
Is hope if it cling not aright,
O my God, unto Thee.

Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

IN tempest and storm, blackness of
darkness for ever,
A fire unextinguished, a worm's
indestructible swarm;
Where no hope shall ever be more,
and love shall be never,
In tempest and storm;
Where the form of all things is
fashionless, void of all form;
Where from death that severeth all,
the soul cannot sever
In tempest and storm.

TOLL, bell, toll. For hope is flying
Sighing from the earthbound soul:
Life is sighing, life is dying:
Toll, bell, toll.

Gropes in its own grave the mole,
Wedding darkness, undescrying,
Tending to no different goal.

Self-slain soul, in vain thy sighing:
Self-slain, who should make thee
whole?
Vain the clamour of thy crying:
Toll, bell, toll.

ALL THINGS

JESUS alone:—if thus it were to
me;
Yet thus it cannot be;
Lord, I have all things if I have
but Thee.

Jesus and all:—precious His
bounties are,
Yet He more precious far;
Day's-eyes are many, one the
Morning Star.

Jesus my all:—so let me rest in love,
Thy peaceable poor dove,
Some time below till timeless time
above.

Before 1893.

HEAVEN OVERARCHES

HEAVEN overarches earth and sea,
Earth-sadness and sea-bitterness.
Heaven overarches you and me:
A little while and we shall be—
Please God—where there is no more sea
Nor barren wilderness.
Heaven overarches you and me,
And all earth's gardens and her graves.
Look up with me, until we see
The day break and the shadows flee.
What though to-night wrecks you and me
If so to-morrow saves?

Circa 1893.

GENERAL POEMS

A PORTRAIT

1

SHE gave up beauty in her tender youth,
Gave all her hope and joy and pleasant ways;
She covered up her eyes lest they should gaze
On vanity, and chose the bitter truth.
Harsh towards herself, towards others full of ruth,
Servant of servants, little known to praise,
Long prayers and fasts trenched on her nights and days:
She schooled herself to sights and sounds uncouth
That with the poor and stricken she might make
A home, until the least of all sufficed
Her wants; her own self learned she to forsake,
Counting all earthly gain but hurt and loss.
So with calm will she chose and bore the cross
And hated all for love of Jesus Christ.

21 *November* 1850.

2

They knelt in silent anguish by her bed,
And could not weep; but calmly there she lay.
All pain had left her; and the sun's last ray
Shone through upon her, warming into red
The shady curtains. In her heart she said:
'Heaven opens; I leave these and go away;

The Bridegroom calls,—shall the
Bride seek to stay?'
Then low upon her breast she bowed
her head.
O lily flower, O gem of priceless
worth,
O dove with patient voice and
patient eyes,
O fruitful vine amid a land of
dearth,
O maid replete with loving
purities,
Thou bowedst down thy head with
friends on earth
To raise it with the saints in
Paradise.

24 *February* 1847.

THE WHOLE HEAD IS SICK AND THE WHOLE HEART FAINT.

Woe for the young who say that life
is long,
Who turn from the sun-rising to
the West,
Who feel no pleasure and can
find no rest,
Who in the morning sigh for even-
song.
Their hearts, weary because of this
world's wrong,
Yearn with a thousand longings
unexprest;
They have a wound no mortal
ever drest,
An ill than all earth's remedies
more strong.
For them the fount of gladness hath
run dry,
And in all Nature is no pleasant
thing;
For them there is no glory in the
sky,
No sweetness in the breezes' mur-
muring:
They say, 'The peace of heaven is
placed too high,
And this earth changeth and is
perishing.'

6 *December* 1847.

VANITY OF VANITIES

Ah woe is me for pleasure that is
vain,
Ah woe is me for glory that is
past!
Pleasure that bringeth sorrow at
the last,
Glory that at the last bringeth no
gain.
So saith the sinking heart; and so
again
It shall say till the mighty angel-
blast
Is blown, making the sun and
moon aghast,
And showering down the stars like
sudden rain.
And evermore men shall go fear-
fully,
Bending beneath their weight of
heaviness;
And ancient men shall lie down
wearily,
And strong men shall rise up in
weariness:
Yea even the young shall answer
sighingly,
Saying one to another 'How vain
it is!'

1847.

THREE STAGES

1.—A PAUSE OF THOUGHT

I LOOKED for that which is not, nor can be,
And hope deferred made my heart sick in truth:
But years must pass before a hope of youth
Is resigned utterly.

I watched and waited with a steadfast will:
And though the object seemed to flee away
That I so longed for, ever day by day
I watched and waited still.

Sometimes I said: 'This thing shall be no more;
My expectation wearies and shall cease;
I will resign it now and be at peace':
Yet never gave it o'er.

Sometimes I said: 'It is an empty name
I long for; to a name why should I give
The peace of all the days I have to live?'—
Yet gave it all the same.

Alas thou foolish one! alike unfit
For healthy joy and salutary pain:
Thou knowest the chase useless, and again
Turnest to follow it.

14 February 1848.

2.—THE END OF THE FIRST PART

My happy happy dream is finished with,
My dream in which alone I lived so long.
My heart slept — woe is me, it wakeneth;
Was weak —I thought it strong.

Oh weary wakening from a life-true dream!
Oh pleasant dream from which I wake in pain!
I rested all my trust on things that seem,
And all my trust is vain.

I must pull down my palace that I built,
Dig up the pleasure-gardens of my soul;
Must change my laughter to sad tears for guilt,
My freedom to control.

Now all the cherished secrets of my heart,
Now all my hidden hopes, are turned to sin.
Part of my life is dead, part sick and part
Is all on fire within.

The fruitless thought of what I might have been,
Haunting me ever, will not let me rest.
A cold North wind has withered all my green,
My sun is in the West.

But, where my palace stood, with the same stone
I will uprear a shady hermitage:
And there my spirit shall keep house alone,
Accomplishing its age.

There other garden-beds shall lie around,
Full of sweet-briar and incense-bearing thyme:
There I will sit, and listen for the sound
Of the last lingering chime.

18 *April* 1849.

3

I THOUGHT to deal the death-stroke at a blow:
To give all, once for all, but never more:—
Then sit to hear the low waves fret the shore,
Or watch the silent snow.

'Oh rest,' I thought, 'in silence and the dark:
Oh rest, if nothing else, from head to feet:
Though I may see no more the poppied wheat,
Or sunny soaring lark.

'These chimes are slow, but surely strike at last:
This sand is slow, but surely droppeth through:
And much there is to suffer, much to do,
Before the time be past.

'So will I labour, but will not rejoice:
Will do and bear, but will not hope again:
Gone dead alike to pulses of quick pain
And pleasure's counterpoise.'

I said so in my heart: and so I thought
My life would lapse, a tedious monotone:
I thought to shut myself and dwell alone
Unseeking and unsought.

But first I tired, and then my care grew slack,
Till my heart dreamed, and maybe wandered too:—
I felt the sunshine glow again, and knew
The swallow on its track:

All birds awoke to building in the leaves,
All buds awoke to fullness and sweet scent:
Ah too my heart woke unawares, intent
On fruitful harvest-sheaves.

Full pulse of life, that I had deemed was dead;
Full throb of youth, that I had deemed at rest.
Alas I cannot build myself a nest,
I cannot crown my head

With royal purple blossoms for the feast,
Nor flush with laughter, nor exult in song:—
These joys may drift, as time now drifts along;
And cease, as once they ceased.

I may pursue, and yet may not attain,
Athirst and panting all the days I live:
Or seem to hold, yet nerve myself to give
What once I gave, again.

25 *July* 1854.

LADY MONTREVOR

I DO not look for love that is a dream—
I only seek for courage to be still;
To bear my grief with an unbending will,
And when I am a-weary not to seem.
Let the round world roll on; let the sun beam;
Let the wind blow, and let the rivers fill
The everlasting sea, and on the hill
The palms almost touch heaven, as children deem.
And, though young spring and summer pass away,
And autumn and cold winter come again,
And though my soul, being tired of its pain,
Pass from the ancient earth, and though my clay
Return to dust, my tongue shall not complain;—
No man shall mock me after this my day.

18 *February* 1848.

SONG

SHE sat and sang alway
By the green margin of a stream,
Watching the fishes leap and play
Beneath the glad sunbeam.

I sat and wept alway
Beneath the moon's most shadowy beam,
Watching the blossoms of the May
Weep leaves into the stream.

I wept for memory;
She sang for hope that is so fair:
My tears were swallowed by the sea;
Her songs died on the air.

26 *November* 1848.

BITTER FOR SWEET

SUMMER is gone with all its roses,
Its sun and perfumes and sweet flowers,
Its warm air and refreshing showers:
And even Autumn closes.

Yea, Autumn's chilly self is going,
And Winter comes which is yet colder;
Each day the hoar-frost waxes bolder,
And the last buds cease blowing.

1 *December* 1848.

SONG

WHEN I am dead, my dearest,
Sing no sad songs for me;
Plant thou no roses at my head,
Nor shady cypress tree:
Be the green grass above me
With showers and dewdrops wet:
And if thou wilt, remember,
And if thou wilt, forget.

I shall not see the shadows,
I shall not feel the rain;
I shall not hear the nightingale
Sing on as if in pain:

And dreaming through the twilight
That doth not rise nor set,
Haply I may remember,
And haply may forget.

12 *December* 1848.

ON KEATS

A GARDEN in a garden: a green spot
Where all is green: most fitting slumber-place
For the strong man grown weary of a race
Soon over. Unto him a goodly lot
Hath fallen in fertile ground; there thorns are not,
But his own daisies; silence, full of grace,
Surely hath shed a quiet on his face;
His earth is but sweet leaves that fall and rot.
What was his record of himself, ere he
'Went from us? 'Here lies one whose name was writ
In water.' While the chilly shadows flit
Of sweet St. Agnes' Eve, while basil springs—
His name, in every humble heart that sings,
Shall be a fountain of love, verily.

18 *January* 1849 (Eve of St. Agnes).

HAVE PATIENCE

THE goblets all are broken,
The pleasant wine is spilt,
The songs cease. If thou wilt,
Listen, and hear truth spoken.
We take thought for the morrow,
And know not we shall see it;
We look on death with sorrow,
And cannot flee it.
Youth passes like the lightning,
Not to return again,—
Just for a little bright'ning
The confines of a plain,
Gilding the spires, and whit'ning
The gravestones and the slain.
Youth passes like the odour
From the white rose's cup
When the hot sun drinks up
The dew that overflowed her:
Then life forsakes the petals
That had been very fair;
No beauty lingers there,
And no bee settles.
But, when the rose is dead
And the leaves fallen,
And when the earth has spread
A snow-white pall on,
The thorn remains, once hidden
By the green growth above it—
A darksome guest unbidden,
With none to love it.
Manhood is turbulent,
And old age tires;
That hath no still content,
This no desires.
The present hath even less
Joy than the past,
And more cares fret it:—
Life is a weariness
From first to last—
Let us forget it:
Fill high and deep!—But how?
The goblets all are broken.
Nay then, have patience now:
For this is but a token
We soon shall have no need
Of such to cheer us;
The palm-branches decreed
And crowns to be our meed
Are very near us.

23 *January* 1849.

SONG

Oh roses for the flush of youth,
And laurel for the perfect prime;
But pluck an ivy branch for me
Grown old before my time.

Oh violets for the grave of youth,
And bay for those dead in their prime;
Give me the withered leaves I chose
Before in the old time.

6 *February* 1849.

AN END

Love, strong as Death, is dead.
Come, let us make his bed
Among the dying flowers:
A green turf at his head;
And a stone at his feet,
Whereon we may sit
In the quiet evening hours.

He was born in the spring,
And died before the harvesting:
On the last warm summer day
He left us; he would not stay
For autumn twilight cold and grey.
Sit we by his grave, and sing
He is gone away.

To few chords and sad and low
Sing we so:
Be our eyes fixed on the grass
Shadow-veiled as the years pass,
While we think of all that was
In the long ago.

5 *March* 1849.

DREAM LAND

Where sunless rivers weep
Their waves into the deep,
She sleeps a charmèd sleep:
Awake her not.
Led by a single star,
She came from very far
To seek where shadows are
Her pleasant lot.

She left the rosy morn,
She left the fields of corn,
For twilight cold and lorn
And water springs.
Through sleep, as through a veil,
She sees the sky look pale,
And hears the nightingale
That sadly sings.

Rest, rest, a perfect rest
Shed over brow and breast;
Her face is toward the west,
The purple land.
She cannot see the grain
Ripening on hill and plain,
She cannot feel the rain
Upon her hand.

Rest, rest, for evermore
Upon a mossy shore;
Rest, rest at the heart's core
Till time shall cease:
Sleep that no pain shall wake;
Night that no morn shall break,
Till joy shall overtake
Her perfect peace.

April 1849.

AFTER DEATH

The curtains were half drawn, the floor was swept
And strewn with rushes, rosemary and may
Lay thick upon the bed on which I lay,

Where through the lattice ivy-shadows crept.
He leaned above me, thinking that I slept
And could not hear him; but I heard him say,
'Poor child, poor child': and as he turned away
Came a deep silence, and I knew he wept.
He did not touch the shroud, or raise the fold
That hid my face, or take my hand in his,
Or ruffle the smooth pillows for my head:
He did not love me living; but once dead
He pitied me; and very sweet it is
To know he still is warm though I am cold.

28 *April* 1849.

REST

O EARTH, lie heavily upon her eyes;
Seal her sweet eyes weary of watching, Earth;
Lie close around her; leave no room for mirth
With its harsh laughter, nor for sound of sighs.
She hath no questions, she hath no replies,
Hushed in and curtained with a blessed dearth
Of all that irked her from the hour of birth;
With stillness that is almost Paradise.
Darkness more clear than noonday holdeth her,
Silence more musical than any song;
Even her very heart has ceased to stir:
Until the morning of Eternity
Her rest shall not begin nor end, but be;
And when she wakes she will not think it long.

15 *May* 1849.

LOOKING FORWARD

SLEEP, let me sleep, for I am sick of care;
Sleep, let me sleep, for my pain wearies me.
Shut out the light; thicken the heavy air
With drowsy incense; let a distant stream
Of music lull me, languid as a dream,
Soft as the whisper of a summer sea.

Pluck me no rose that groweth on a thorn,
Nor myrtle white and cold as snow in June,
Fit for a virgin on her marriage morn;
But bring me poppies brimmed with sleepy death,
And ivy choking what it garlandeth,
And primroses that open to the moon.

Listen, the music swells into a song,
A simple song I loved in days of yore;
The echoes take it up and up along
The hills, and the wind blows it back again.—
Peace, peace, there is a memory in that strain
Of happy days that shall return no more.

Oh peace! your music wakeneth old thought,
But not old hope that made my life so sweet,
Only the longing that must end in nought.
Have patience with me, friends, a little while:
For soon, where you shall dance and sing and smile,
My quickened dust may blossom at your feet.

Sweet thought that I may yet live and grow green,
That leaves may yet spring from the withered root,
And buds and flowers and berries half unseen.
Then, if you haply muse upon the past,
Say this: Poor child, she has her wish at last;
Barren through life, but in death bearing fruit.

8 *June* 1849.

LIFE HIDDEN

Roses and lilies grow above the place
Where she sleeps the long sleep that doth not dream.
If we could look upon her hidden face,
Nor shadow would be there, nor garish gleam
Of light; her life is lapsing like a stream
That makes no noise but floweth on apace
Seawards, while many a shade and shady beam
Vary the ripples in their gliding chase.
She doth not see, but knows; she doth not feel,
And yet is sensible; she hears no sound,
Yet counts the flight of time and doth not err.
Peace far and near, peace to ourselves and her:
Her body is at peace in holy ground,
Her spirit is at peace where Angels kneel.

23 *July* 1849.

REMEMBER

Remember me when I am gone away,
Gone far away into the silent land;
When you can no more hold me by the hand,
Nor I half turn to go yet turning stay.
Remember me when no more day by day
You tell me of our future that you plann'd:
Only remember me; you understand
It will be late to counsel then or pray.
Yet if you should forget me for a while
And afterwards remember, do not grieve:
For if the darkness and corruption leave
A vestige of the thoughts that once I had,
Better by far you should forget and smile
Than that you should remember and be sad.

25 *July* 1849.

SOUND SLEEP

SOME are laughing, some are weeping;
She is sleeping, only sleeping.
Round her rest wild flowers are creeping;
There the wind is heaping, heaping
Sweetest sweets of Summer's keeping,
By the corn-fields ripe for reaping.

There are lilies, and there blushes
The deep rose, and there the thrushes
Sing till latest sunlight flushes
In the west; a fresh wind brushes
Through the leaves while evening hushes.

There by day the lark is singing
And the grass and weeds are springing;
There by night the bat is winging;
There for ever winds are bringing
Far-off chimes of church-bells ringing.

Night and morning, noon and even,
Their sound fills her dreams with Heaven:
The long strife at length is striven:
Till her grave-bands shall be riven,
Such is the good portion given
To her soul at rest and shriven.

13 *August* 1849.

QUEEN ROSE

THE jessamine shows like a star;
The lilies sway like sceptres slim;
Fair clematis from near and far
Sets forth its wayward tangled whim;
Curved meadowsweet blooms rich and dim;—
But yet a rose is fairer far.

The jessamine is odorous; so
Maid-lilies are, and clematis;
And where tall meadowsweet-flowers grow
A rare and subtle perfume is;—
What can there be more choice than these?—
A rose when it doth bud and blow.

Let others choose sweet jessamine,
Or weave their lily-crown aright,
And let who love it pluck and twine
Loose clematis, or draw delight
From meadowsweets' cluster downy white—
The rose, the perfect rose, be mine.

16 *August* 1849.

HOW ONE CHOSE

'BEYOND the sea, in a green land
Where only rivers are—
Beyond the clouds, in the clear sky
Close by some quiet star—
Could you not fancy there might be
A home, Beloved, for you and me?'

'If there were such a home, my Friend,
Truly prepared for us,
Full of palm-branches, or of crowns
Sun-gemmed and glorious,
How should we reach it? Let us cease
From longing; let us be at peace.'

'The nightingale sang yestereve;
A sweet song singeth she,
Most sad and without any hope,
And full of memory;

But still methought it seemed to speak
To me of home, and bid me seek.'

'The nightingale ceased ere the morn:
Her heart could not contain
The passion of her song, but burst
With the long throbbing pain.
Now she hath rest which is the best,
And now I too would be at rest.'

'Last night I watched the mounting moon:
Her glory was too pale
To shine through the black heavy clouds
That wrapt her like a veil;
And yet with patience she passed through
The mists, and reached the depths of blue.'

'And when the road was travelled o'er
And when the goal was won,
A little while and all her light
Was swallowed by the sun:
The weary moon must seek again,—
Even so our search would be in vain.'

'Yet seek with me. And if our way
Be long and troublesome,
And if our noon be hot until
The chilly shadows come
Of evening,—till those shadows flee
In dawn, think, Love, it is with me.'

'Nay, seek alone: I am no mate
For such as you, in truth:
My heart is old before its time;
Yours yet is in its youth:
This home with pleasures girt about
Seek you, for I am wearied out.'

6 *October* 1849.

SEEKING REST

My Mother said: 'The child is changed
That used to be so still;
All the day long she sings and sings,
And seems to think no ill;
She laughs as if some inward joy
Her heart would overfill.'

My Sisters said: 'Now prythee tell
Thy secret unto us:
Let us rejoice with thee; for all
Is surely prosperous,
Thou art so merry: tell us, Sweet:
We had not used thee thus.'

My Mother says: 'What ails the child
Lately so blythe of cheer?
Art sick or sorry? Nay, it is
The winter of the year;
Wait till the Springtime comes again,
And the sweet flowers appear.'

My Sisters say: 'Come, sit with us,
That we may weep with thee:
Show us thy grief that we may grieve:
Yea haply, if we see
Thy sorrow, we may ease it; but
Shall share it certainly.'

How should I share my pain, who kept
My pleasure all my own?
My Spring will never come again;
My pretty flowers have blown
For the last time; I can but sit
And think and weep alone.

10 *October* 1849.

ENDURANCE

YES, I too could face death and never shrink.
But it is harder to bear hated life;
To strive with hands and knees weary of strife;
To drag the heavy chain whose every link
Galls to the bone; to stand upon the brink
Of the deep grave, nor drowse tho' it be rife
With sleep; to hold with steady hand the knife
Nor strike home:—this is courage, as I think.
Surely to suffer is more than to do.
To do is quickly done: to suffer is
Longer and fuller of heart-sicknesses.
Each day's experience testifies of this.
Good deeds are many, but good lives are few:
Thousands taste the full cup; who drains the lees?

Circa 1850.

WITHERING

FADE, tender lily,
Fade, O crimson rose,
Fade every flower,
Sweetest flower that blows.

Go, chilly autumn,
Come, O winter cold;
Let the green stalks die away
Into common mould.

Birth follows hard on death,
Life on withering:
Hasten, we will come the sooner
Back to pleasant spring.

Circa 1850.

TWILIGHT CALM

OH pleasant eventide!
Clouds on the western side
Grow grey and greyer, hiding the warm sun:
The bees and birds, their happy labours done,
Seek their close nests and bide.

Screened in the leafy wood
The stock-doves sit and brood:
The very squirrel leaps from bough to bough
But lazily; pauses; and settles now
Where once he stored his food.

One by one the flowers close,
Lily and dewy rose
Shutting their tender petals from the moon:
The grasshoppers are still; but not so soon
Are still the noisy crows.

The dormouse squats and eats
Choice little dainty bits
Beneath the spreading roots of a broad lime;
Nibbling his fill he stops from time to time
And listens where he sits.

From far the lowings come
Of cattle driven home:
From farther still the wind brings fitfully

The vast continual murmur of the sea,
Now loud, now almost dumb.

The gnats whirl in the air,
The evening gnats; and there
The owl opes broad his eyes and wings to sail
For prey; the bat wakes; and the shell-less snail
Comes forth, clammy and bare.

Hark! that's the nightingale,
Telling the self-same tale
Her song told when this ancient earth was young:
So echoes answered when her song was sung
In the first wooded vale.

We call it love and pain,
The passion of her strain;
And yet we little understand or know:
Why should it not be rather joy that so
Throbs in each throbbing vein?

In separate herds the deer
Lie; here the bucks, and here
The does, and by its mother sleeps the fawn:
Through all the hours of night until the dawn
They sleep, forgetting fear.

The hare sleeps where it lies,
With wary half-closed eyes;
The cock has ceased to crow, the hen to cluck:
Only the fox is out, some heedless duck
Or chicken to surprise.

Remote, each single star
Comes out, till there they are
All shining brightly. How the dews fall damp!
While close at hand the glow-worm lights her lamp,
Or twinkles from afar.

But evening now is done
As much as if the sun
Day-giving had arisen in the East—
For night has come; and the great calm has ceased,
The quiet sands have run.

7 February 1850.

TWO THOUGHTS OF DEATH

I

HER heart that loved me once is rottenness
Now and corruption; and her life is dead
That was to have been one with mine, she said.
The earth must lie with such a cruel stress
On eyes whereon the white lids used to press;
Foul worms fill up her mouth so sweet and red;
Foul worms are underneath her graceful head;
Yet these, being born of her from nothingness,
These worms are certainly flesh of her flesh.—
How is it that the grass is rank and green
And the dew-dropping rose is brave and fresh
Above what was so sweeter far than they?

ven as her beauty hath passed
quite away,
Theirs too shall be as though it
had not been.

2

› I said underneath the dusky
trees :
But, because still I loved her
memory,
I stooped to pluck a pale anemone,
nd lo my hand lighted upon
heartsease
ot fully blown : while with new
life from these
Fluttered a starry moth that
rapidly
Rose toward the sun : sunlighted
flashed on me
s wings that seemed to throb like
heart-pulses.
ar far away it flew, far out of
sight,—
From earth and flowers of earth
it passed away
s though it flew straight up into
the light.
Then my heart answered me :
Thou fool, to say
That she is dead whose night is
turned to day,
nd no more shall her day turn
back to night.

16 *March* 1850.

THREE MOMENTS

THE Child said : 'Pretty bird,
Come back and play with me.'
The Bird said : 'It is in vain,
For I am free.
I am free, I will not stay,
But will fly far away,
In the woods to sing and play,
Far away, far away.'
The Child sought her Mother :
'I have lost my bird,' said she,
Weeping bitterly.
But the Mother made her answer,
Half sighing pityingly,
Half smiling cheerily :
'Though thy bird come nevermore,
Do not weep ;
Find another playfellow,
Child, and keep
Tears for future pain more deep.'

'Sweet rose, do not wither,'
The Girl said.
But a blight had touched its heart
And it drooped its crimson head.
In the morning it had opened
Full of life and bloom,
But the leaves fell one by one
Till the twilight gloom.
One by one the leaves fell
By summer winds blown from their
stem ;
They fell upon the dewy earth
Which nourished once now tainted
them.
Again the young Girl wept
And sought her Mother's ear :
'My rose is dead so full of grace,
The very rose I meant to place
In the wreath that I wear.'
'Nay, never weep for such as this,'
The Mother answered her :
'But weave another crown, less fair
Perhaps, but fitter for thy hair.
And keep thy tears,' the Mother
said,
'For something heavier.'

The Woman knelt, but did not
pray
Nor weep nor cry ; she only said,

'Not this, not this!' and clasped
her hands
Against her heart, and bowed her
head,
While the great struggle shook the
bed.
'Not this, not this!' tears did not
fall;
'Not this!' it was all
She could say; no sobs would come;
The mortal grief was almost dumb.—
At length when it was over, when
She knew it was and would be so,
She cried: 'O Mother, where are
they,
The tears that used to flow
So easily? One single drop
Might save my reason now, or stop
My heart from breaking. Blessed
tears
Wasted in former years!'
Then the grave Mother made reply:
'O Daughter mine, be of good cheer,
Rejoicing thou canst shed no tear.
Thy pain is almost over now.
Once more thy heart shall throb
with pain,
But then shall never throb again.
Oh happy thou who canst not weep,
Oh happy thou!'

23 *March* 1850.

IS AND WAS

SHE was whiter than the ermine
That half shadowed neck and
hand,
And her tresses were more golden
Than their golden band;
Snowy ostrich plumes she wore;
Yet I almost loved her more
In the simple time before.

Then she plucked the stately lilies,
Knowing not she was more fair,
And she listened to the skylark
In the morning air.
Then, a kerchief all her crown,
She looked for the acorns brown,
Bent their bough, and shook them
down.

Then she thought of Christmas holly
And of Maybloom in sweet May;
Then she loved to pick the cherries
And to turn the hay.
She was humble then and meek,
And the blush upon her cheek
Told of much she could not speak.

Now she is a noble lady
With calm voice not over loud;
Very courteous in her action,
Yet you think her proud;
Much too haughty to affect;
Too indifferent to direct
Or be angry or suspect;
Doing all from self-respect.

Spring 1850.

SONG

WE buried her among the flowers
At falling of the leaf,
And choked back all our tears; her
joy
Could never be our grief.

She lies among the living flowers
And grass, the only thing
That perishes;—or is it that
Our Autumn was her Spring?

Doubtless, if we could see her face,
The smile is settled there
Which almost broke our hearts when
last
We knelt by her in prayer;

When, with tired eyes and failing breath
And hands crossed on her breast,
Perhaps she saw her Guardian spread
His wings above her rest.

So she sleeps hidden in the flowers;
But yet a little while,
And we shall see her wake and rise,
Fair, with the self-same smile.

14 *May* 1850.

ANNIE

ANNIE is fairer than her kith
And kinder than her kin:
Her eyes are like the open heaven
Holy and pure from sin:
Her heart is like an ordered house
Good fairies harbour in:
Oh happy he who wins the love
That I can never win!

Her sisters stand as hyacinths
Around the perfect rose:
They bloom and open to the full,
My bud will scarce unclose.
They are for every butterfly
That comes and sips and goes:
My bud hides in the tender green
Most sweet and hardly shows.

Oh cruel kindness in soft eyes
That are no more than kind,
On which I gaze my heart away
Till the tears make me blind!
How is it others find the way
That I can never find
To make her laugh that sweetest laugh
Which leaves all else behind?

Her hair is like the golden corn
A low wind breathes upon:
Or like the golden harvest-moon
When all the mists are gone:
Or like a stream with golden sands
On which the sun has shone
Day after day in summertime
Ere autumn leaves are wan.

I will not tell her that I love,
Lest she should turn away
With sorrow in her tender heart
Which now is light and gay.
I will not tell her that I love,
Lest she should turn and say
That we must meet no more again
For many a weary day.

26 *September* 1850.

A DIRGE

SHE was as sweet as violets in the Spring,
As fair as any rose in Summertime:
But frail are roses in their prime
And violets in their blossoming.
Even so was she:
And now she lies,
The earth upon her fast-closed eyes,
Dead in the darkness silently.

The sweet Spring violets never bud again,
The roses bloom and perish in a morn:
They see no second quickening lying lorn:
Their beauty dies as though in vain.
Must she die so
For evermore,
Cold as the sand upon the shore,
As passionless for joy and woe?—

Nay she is worth much more than
flowers that fade,
And yet shall be made fair with
purple fruit:
Branch of the Living Vine, whose
Root
From all eternity is laid.
Another Sun
Than this of ours
Has withered up indeed her
flowers
But ripened her grapes every one.
18 *January* 1851.

A SUMMER WISH

LIVE all thy sweet life through,
Sweet Rose, dew-sprent,
Drop down thine evening dew,
To gather it anew
When day is bright:
I fancy thou wast meant
Chiefly to give delight.

Sing in the silent sky,
Glad soaring bird;
Sing out thy notes on high
To sunbeam straying by
Or passing cloud;
Heedless if thou art heard,
Sing thy full song aloud.

Oh that it were with me
As with the flower!
Blooming on its own tree
For butterfly and bee
Its summer morns:
That I might bloom mine hour,
A rose in spite of thorns.

Oh that my work were done
As birds' that soar
Rejoicing in the sun:
That when my time is run
And daylight too,
I so might rest once more
Cool with refreshing dew.
21 *June* 1851.

SONG

IT is not for her even brow
And shining yellow hair,
But it is for her tender eyes
I think my love so fair:
Her tell-tale eyes that smile and
weep
As frankly as they wake and sleep.

It is not for her rounded cheek
I love and fain would win,
But it is for the blush that comes
Straight from the heart within:
The honest blush of maiden shame
That blushes without thought of
blame.

So in my dreams I never hear
Her song, although she sings
As if a choir of spirits swept
From earth with throbbing
wings:
I only hear the simple voice
Whose love makes many hearts
rejoice.
1851.

A FAIR WORLD THOUGH A FALLEN

YOU tell me that the world is fair,
in spite
Of the old Fall; and that I
should not turn
So to the grave, and let my spirit
yearn

fter the quiet of the long last night.
Have I then shut mine eyes against the light,
Grief-deafened lest my spirit should discern?
Yet how could I keep silence when I burn?
nd who can give me comfort?—Hear the right.
Have patience with the weak and sick at heart:
Bind up the wounded with a tender touch,
Comfort the sad, tear-blinded as they go:—
or, though I failed to choose the better part,
Were it a less unutterable woe
If we should come to love this world too much?

30 *August* 1851.

BOOKS IN THE RUNNING BROOKS

'It is enough, enough,' one said,
At play among the flowers:
I spy a rose upon the thorn,
A rainbow in the showers;
hear a merry chime of bells
Ring out the passing hours.'
Soft springs the fountain
From the daisied ground,
oftly falling on the moss
Without a sound.

'It is enough,' she said, and fixed
Calm eyes upon the sky:
I watch a flitting tender cloud
Just like a dove go by;
A lark is rising from the grass,
A wren is building nigh.'
Softly the fountain
Threads its silver way,
Screened by the scented bloom
Of whitest May.

'Enough?' she whispered to herself,
As doubting: 'Is it so?
Enough to wear the roses fair,
Oh sweetest flowers that blow?
Oh yes, it surely is enough—
My happy home below!'
A shadow stretcheth
From the hither shore:
The waters darken
More and more and more.

'It is enough,' she says; but with
A listless weary moan:
'Enough,' if mixing with her friends:
'Enough,' if left alone;
But to herself: 'Not yet enough
This suffering, to atone?'
The cold black waters
Seem to stagnate there,
Without a single wave
Or breath of air.

And now she says: 'It is enough,'
Half languid and half stirred:
'Enough,' to silence and to sound,
Thorn, blossom, soaring bird:
'Enough,' she says; but with a lack
Of something in the word.
Defiled and turbid
See the waters pass,
Half light, half shadow,
Struggling through the grass.

Ah will it ever dawn, that day
When, calm for good or ill,

Her heart shall say: 'It is enough,
For Thou art with me still;
It is enough, O Lord my God,
Thine only blessed Will'?
Then shall the fountain sing
And flow to rest,
Clear as the sun-track
To the purple West.

26 *August* 1852.

THE SUMMER IS ENDED

WREATHE no more lilies in my hair,
For I am dying, Sister sweet:
Or, if you will for the last time
Indeed, why make me fair
Once for my winding-sheet.

Pluck no more roses for my breast,
For I like them fade in my prime:
Or, if you will, why pluck them still,
That they may share my rest
Once more for the last time.

Weep not for me when I am gone,
Dear tender one, but hope and smile:
Or, if you cannot choose but weep,
A little while weep on,
Only a little while.

11 *September* 1852.

AFTER ALL

'I THOUGHT your search was over.'
—'So I thought.'
'But you are seeking still.'—'Yes, even so:
Still seeking in mine own despite below
That which in heaven alone is found unsought:
Still spending for that thing which is not bought.'
'Then chase no more this shifting empty show.'—
'Amen: so bid a drowning man forego
The straw he clutches: will he so be taught?
You have a home where peace broods like a dove,
Screened from the weary world's loud discontent:
You have home here: you wait for home above.
I must unlearn the pleasant ways I went:
Must learn another hope, another love,
And sigh indeed for home in banishment.'

24 *October* 1852.

FROM THE ANTIQUE

THE wind shall lull us yet,
The flowers shall spring above us:
And those who hate forget,
And those forget who love us.

The pulse of hope shall cease,
Of joy and of regretting:
We twain shall sleep in peace,
Forgotten and forgetting.

For us no sun shall rise,
Nor wind rejoice, nor river,
Where we with fast-closed eyes
Shall sleep and sleep for ever.

10 *December* 1852.

TO WHAT PURPOSE IS THIS WASTE?

A WINDY shell singing upon the shore:
A lily budding in a desert place,
Blooming alone
With no companion
To praise its perfect perfume and its grace:
A rose crimson and blushing at the core,
Hedged-in with thorns behind it and before:
A fountain in the grass,
Whose shadowy waters pass
Only to nourish birds and furnish food
For squirrels of the wood:
An oak deep in the forest's heart, the house
Of black-eyed tiny mouse:
Its strong roots, fit for fuel, roofing in
The hoarded nuts, acorns, and grains of wheat—
Shutting them from the wind and scorching heat,
And sheltering them when the rains begin:

A precious pearl deep-buried in the sea
Where none save fishes be:
The fullest merriest note
For which the skylark strains his silver throat,
Heard only in the sky
By other birds that fitfully
Chase one another as they fly:
The ripest plum down-tumbled to the ground
By southern winds most musical of sound,
But by no thirsty traveller found:
Honey of wild bees in their ordered cells
Stored, not for human mouths to taste:—
I said smiling superior down: What waste
Of good, where no man dwells!

This I said on a pleasant day in June
Before the sun had set, though a white moon
Already flaked the quiet blue
Which not a star looked through.
But still the air was warm, and drowsily
It blew into my face:
So, since that same day I had wandered deep
Into the country, I sought out a place
For rest beneath a tree,
And very soon forgot myself in sleep:
Not so mine own words had forgotten me.
Mine eyes were open to behold
All hidden things,
And mine ears heard all secret whisperings:
So my proud tongue, that had been bold
To carp and to reprove,
Was silenced by the force of utter Love.

All voices of all things inanimate
Join with the song of Angels and the song
Of blessed spirits, chiming with
Their Hallelujahs. One wind wakeneth
Across the sleeping sea, crisping along

The waves, and brushes through the great
Forests and tangled hedges, and calls out
Of rivers a clear sound,
And makes the ripe corn rustle on the ground,
And murmurs in a shell:
Till all their voices swell
Above the clouds in one loud hymn
Joining the song of Seraphim,
Or like pure incense circle round about
The walls of heaven, or like a well-spring rise
In shady Paradise.

A lily blossoming unseen
Holds honey in its silver cup
Whereon a bee may sup,
Till being full she takes the rest
And stores it in her waxen nest:
While the fair blossom lifted up
On its one stately stem of green
Is type of her the Undefiled,
Arrayed in white, whose eyes are mild
As a white dove's, whose garment is
Blood-cleansed from all impurities
And earthly taints,
Her robe the righteousness of Saints.

And other eyes than ours
Were made to look on flowers,
Eyes of small birds and insects small:
The deep sun-blushing rose
Round which the prickles close
Opens her bosom to them all.
The tiniest living thing
That soars on feathered wing,
Or crawls among the long grass out of sight,
Has just as good a right
To its appointed portion of delight
As any King.

Why should we grudge a hidden water-stream
To birds and squirrels while we have enough?
As if a nightingale should cease to sing
Lest we should hear, or finch leafed out of sight
Warbling its fill in summer light:
As if sweet violets in the Spring
Should cease to blow, for fear our path should seem
Less weary or less rough.

So every oak that stands a house
For skilful mouse
And year by year renews its strength,
Shakes acorns from a hundred boughs
Which shall be oaks at length.

Who hath weighed the waters and shall say
What is hidden in the depths from day?
Pearls and precious stones and golden sands,
Wondrous weeds and blossoms rare,
Kept back from human hands,
But good and fair,
A silent praise as pain is silent prayer.
A hymn and incense rising toward the skies,
As our whole life should rise:
An offering without stint from earth below,
Which Love accepteth so.

Thus is it with a warbling bird
With fruit bloom-ripe and full of seed,
With honey which the wild bees draw
From flowers, and store for future need
By a perpetual law.
We want the faith that hath not seen
Indeed, but hath believed His truth
Who witnessed that His work was good:
So we pass cold to age from youth.
Alas for us, for we have heard
And known, but have not understood!

O earth, earth, earth, thou yet shalt bow
Who art so fair and lifted up,
Thou yet shalt drain the bitter cup.
Men's eyes that wait upon thee now,
All eyes shall see thee lost and mean,
Exposed and valued at thy worth,
While thou shalt stand ashamed and dumb.—
Ah when the Son of Man shall come,
Shall He find faith upon the earth?

22 *January* 1853.

NEXT OF KIN

THE shadows gather round me, while you are in the sun:
My day is almost ended, but yours is just begun:
The winds are singing to us both and the streams are singing still,
And they fill your heart with music, but mine they cannot fill.

Your home is built in sunlight, mine in another day:
Your home is close at hand, sweet friend, but mine is far away:
Your bark is in the haven where you fain would be:
I must launch out into the deep, across the unknown sea.

You, white as dove or lily or spirit of the light:
I, stained and cold and glad to hide in the cold dark night:
You, joy to many a loving heart and light to many eyes:
I, lonely in the knowledge earth is full of vanities.

Yet when your day is over, as mine is nearly done,
And when your race is finished, as mine is almost run,
You, like me, shall cross your hands and bow your graceful head:
Yea, we twain shall sleep together in an equal bed.

21 *February* 1853.

FOR ROSALINE'S ALBUM

DO you hear the low winds singing,
And streams singing on their bed?—
Very distant bells are ringing
In a chapel for the dead:—
Death-pale better than life-red.

Mother, come to me in rest,
And bring little May to see.
Shall I bid no other guest?

Seven slow nights have passed away
Over my forgotten clay:
None must come save you and she.

February 1853.

WHAT?

STRENGTHENING as secret manna,
Fostering as clouds above,
Kind as a hovering dove,
Full as a plenteous river,
Our glory and our banner
For ever and for ever.

Dear as a dying cadence
Of music in the drowsy night:
Fair as the flowers which maidens
Pluck for an hour's delight,
And then forget them quite.

Gay as a cowslip-meadow
Fresh opening to the sun
When new day is begun:
Soft as a sunny shadow
When day is almost done.

Glorious as purple twilight,
Pleasant as budding tree,
Untouched as any islet
Shrined in an unknown sea:
Sweet as a fragrant rose amid the dew:—
As sweet, as fruitless too.

A bitter dream to wake from,
But oh how pleasant while we dream!
A poisoned fount to take from,
But oh how sweet the stream!

May 1853.

A PAUSE

THEY made the chamber sweet with flowers and leaves,
And the bed sweet with flowers on which I lay;
While my soul, love-bound, loitered on its way.
I did not hear the birds about the eaves,
Nor hear the reapers talk among the sheaves:
Only my soul kept watch from day to day,
My thirsty soul kept watch for one away:—
Perhaps he loves, I thought, remembers, grieves.
At length there came the step upon the stair,
Upon the lock the old familiar hand:
Then first my spirit seemed to scent the air
Of Paradise; then first the tardy sand
Of time ran golden; and I felt my hair
Put on a glory, and my soul expand.

10 *June* 1853.

THREE SEASONS

'A CUP for hope!' she said,
In springtime ere the bloom was old;
The crimson wine was poor and cold
By her mouth's richer red.

'A cup for love!' how low,
How soft the words; and all the while
Her blush was rippling with a smile
Like summer after snow.

'A cup for memory!'
Cold cup that one must drain alone:
While autumn winds are up and moan
Across the barren sea.

Hope, memory, love:
Hope for fair morn, and love for day,
And memory for the evening grey
And solitary dove.

18 *June* 1853.

HOLY INNOCENTS

SLEEP, little Baby, sleep;
The holy Angels love thee,
And guard thy bed, and keep
A blessed watch above thee.
No spirit can come near
Nor evil beast to harm thee:
Sleep, Sweet, devoid of fear
Where nothing need alarm thee.

The Love which doth not sleep,
The eternal Arms surround thee:
The Shepherd of the sheep
In perfect love hath found thee.
Sleep through the holy night,
Christ-kept from snare and sorrow,
Until thou wake to light
And love and warmth to-morrow.

1 *July* 1853.

SEASONS

IN Springtime when the leaves are young,
Clear dewdrops gleam like jewels, hung
On boughs the fair birds roost among.

When Summer comes with sweet unrest,
Birds weary of their mother's breast,
And look abroad and leave the nest.

In Autumn ere the waters freeze,
The swallows fly across the seas:—
If we could fly away with these!

In Winter when the birds are gone,
The sun himself looks starved and wan,
And starved the snow he shines upon.

September 1853.

BURIED

THOU sleepest where the lilies fade,
Thou dwellest where the lilies fade not:
Sweet, when thine earthly part decayed
Thy heavenly part decayed not.

Thou dwellest where the roses blow,
The crimson roses bud and blossom:
While on thine eyes is heaped the snow—
The snow upon thy bosom.

1853.

A WISH

I WISH I were a little bird
That out of sight doth soar;
I wish I were a song once heard
But often pondered o'er,
Or shadow of a lily stirred
By wind upon the floor,
Or echo of a loving word
Worth all that went before,
Or memory of a hope deferred
That springs again no more.

1853.

TWO PARTED

'SING of a love lost and forgotten,
Sing of a joy finished and o'er,

Sing of a heart core-cold and rotten,
Sing of a hope springing no more.'
'Sigh for a heart aching and sore.'

'I was most true and my own love betrayed me,
I was most true and she would none of me.
Was it the cry of the world that dismayed thee?
Love, I had bearded the wide world for thee.'
'Hark to the sorrowful sound of the sea.'

'Still in my dreams she comes tender and gracious,
Still in my dreams love looks out of her eyes:
Oh that the love of a dream were veracious,
Or that thus dreaming I might not arise!'
'Oh for the silence that stilleth all sighs!'

1853.

AUTUMN

CARE flieth,
Hope and Fear together:
Love dieth
In the Autumn weather.

For a friend
Even Care is pleasant:
When Fear doth end
Hope is no more present:
Autumn silences the turtle-dove:—
In blank Autumn who could speak of love?

1853.

SEASONS

CROCUSES and snowdrops wither,
Violets, primroses together,
Fading with the fading Spring
Before a fuller blossoming.

O sweet Summer, pass not soon,
Stay awhile the harvest-moon:
O sweetest Summer, do not go,
For Autumn's next and next the snow.

When Autumn comes the days are drear,
It is the downfall of the year:
We heed the wind and falling leaf
More than the golden harvest-sheaf.

Dreary Winter come at last:
Come quickly, so be quickly past:
Dusk and sluggish Winter, wane
Till Spring and sunlight dawn again.

7 *December* 1853.

BALLAD

'SOFT white lamb in the daisy meadow,
Come hither and play with me,
For I am lonesome and I am tired
Underneath the apple tree.'

'There's your husband if you are lonesome, lady,
And your bed if you want for rest:
And your baby for a playfellow
With a soft hand for your breast.'

'Fair white dove in the sunshine,
Perched on the ashen bough,
Come and perch by me and coo to me
While the buds are blowing now.

'I must keep my nestlings warm, lady,
Underneath my downy breast:
There's your baby to coo and crow to you
While I brood upon my nest.'

'Faint white rose, come lie on my heart,
Come lie there with your thorn:
For I'll be dead at the vesper-bell
And buried the morrow morn.'

'There's blood on your lily breast, lady,
Like roses when they blow,
And there's blood upon your little hand
That should be white as snow:
I will stay amid my fellows
Where the lilies grow.'

'But it's oh my own own little babe
That I had you here to kiss,
And to comfort me in the strange next world
Though I slighted you so in this.'

'You shall kiss both cheek and chin, mother,
And kiss me between the eyes,
Or ever the moon is on her way
And the pleasant stars arise:
You shall kiss and kiss your fill, mother,
In the nest of Paradise.'

7 January 1854.

A SOUL

SHE stands as pale as Parian statues stand;
Like Cleopatra when she turned at bay,
And felt her strength above the Roman sway,
And felt the aspic writhing in her hand.
Her face is steadfast toward the shadowy land,
For dim beyond it looms the land of day:
Her feet are steadfast, all the arduous way
That foot-track doth not waver on the sand.
She stands there like a beacon through the night,
A pale clear beacon where the storm-drift is—
She stands alone, a wonder deathly-white:
She stands there patient nerved with inner might,
Indomitable in her feebleness,
Her face and will athirst against the light.

7 February 1854.

THE BOURNE

UNDERNEATH the growing grass,
Underneath the living flowers,
Deeper than the sound of showers:
There we shall not count the hours
By the shadows as they pass.

Youth and health will be but vain,
Beauty reckoned of no worth:
There a very little girth
Can hold round what once the earth
Seemed too narrow to contain.

17 February 1854.

DREAM-LOVE

YOUNG Love lies sleeping
In May-time of the year,
Among the lilies,
Lapped in the tender light:
White lambs come grazing,
White doves come building there;
And round about him
The May-bushes are white.

Soft moss the pillow
For oh a softer cheek;
Broad leaves cast shadow
Upon the heavy eyes:
There winds and waters
Grow lulled and scarcely speak;
There twilight lingers
The longest in the skies.

Young Love lies dreaming;
But who shall tell the dream?
A perfect sunlight
On rustling forest tips;
Or perfect moonlight
Upon a rippling stream;
Or perfect silence,
Or song of cherished lips.

Burn odours round him
To fill the drowsy air;
Weave silent dances
Around him to and fro;
For oh in waking
The sights are not so fair,
And song and silence
Are not like these below.

Young Love lies dreaming
Till summer days are gone,—
Dreaming and drowsing
Away to perfect sleep:
He sees the beauty
Sun hath not looked upon,
And tastes the fountain
Unutterably deep.

Him perfect music
Doth hush unto his rest,
And through the pauses
The perfect silence calms:
Oh poor the voices
Of earth from east to west,
And poor earth's stillness
Between her stately palms!

Young Love lies drowsing
Away to poppied death;
Cool shadows deepen
Across the sleeping face:
So fails the summer
With warm delicious breath;
And what hath autumn
To give us in its place?

Draw close the curtains
Of branchèd evergreen;
Change cannot touch them
With fading fingers sere:
Here the first violets
Perhaps will bud unseen,
And a dove, may be,
Return to nestle here.

19 *May* 1854.

FROM THE ANTIQUE

IT'S a weary life, it is, she said:—
Doubly blank in a woman's lot:
I wish and I wish I were a man:
Or, better than any being, were not:

Were nothing at all in all the world.
Not a body and not a soul:
Not so much as a grain of dust
Or drop of water from pole to pole.

Still the world would wag on the same,
Still the seasons go and come:
Blossoms bloom as in days of old,
Cherries ripen and wild bees hum.

None would miss me in all the world,
How much less would care or weep:
I should be nothing, while all the rest
Would wake and weary and fall asleep.

28 *June* 1854.

LONG LOOKED FOR

When the eye hardly sees,
And the pulse hardly stirs,
And the heart would scarcely quicken
Though the voice were hers:
Then the longing wasting fever
Will be almost past:
Sleep indeed come back again,
And peace at last.

Not till then, dear friends,
Not till then, most like, most dear,
The dove will fold its wings
To settle here.
Then to all her coldness
I also shall be cold;
Then I also have forgotten
Our happy love of old.

Close mine eyes with care,
Cross my hands upon my breast,
Let shadows and full silence
Tell of rest:
For she yet may look upon me,
Too proud to speak, but know
One heart less loves her in the world
Than loved her long ago.

Strew flowers upon the bed
And flowers upon the floor,
Let all be sweet and comely
When she stands at the door:
Fair as a bridal chamber
For her to come into,
When the sunny day is over
At falling of the dew.

If she comes, watch her not,
But careless turn aside:
She may weep if left alone
With her beauty and her pride:
She may pluck a leaf perhaps
Or a languid violet
When life and love are finished
And even I forget.

12 *August* 1854.

LISTENING

She listened like a cushat dove
That listens to its mate alone:
She listened like a cushat dove
That loves but only one.

Not fair as men would reckon fair,
Nor noble as they count the line:
Only as graceful as a bough,
And tendrils of the vine:
Only as noble as sweet Eve
Your ancestress and mine.

And downcast were her dovelike eyes
And downcast was her tender cheek;
Her pulses fluttered like a dove
To hear him speak.

October 1854.

DEAD BEFORE DEATH

Ah changed and cold, how changed and very cold,
With stiffened smiling lips and cold calm eyes!

Changed, yet the same; much
knowing, little wise,—
This was the promise of the days of old!
Grown hard and stubborn in the ancient mould,
Grown rigid in the sham of life-long lies:
We hoped for better things as years would rise,
But it is over as a tale once told.
All fallen the blossom that no fruitage bore,
All lost the present and the future time,
All lost, all lost, the lapse that went before:
So lost till death shut-to the opened door,
So lost from chime to everlasting chime,
So cold and lost for ever evermore.

2 *December* 1854.

ECHO

COME to me in the silence of the night;
Come in the speaking silence of a dream;
Come with soft rounded cheeks and eyes as bright
As sunlight on a stream;
Come back in tears,
O memory, hope, love of finished years.

O dream how sweet, too sweet, too bitter sweet,
Whose wakening should have been in Paradise,
Where souls brimfull of love abide and meet;
Where thirsting longing eyes
Watch the slow door
That opening, letting in, lets out no more.

Yet come to me in dreams, that I may live
My very life again though cold in death:
Come back to me in dreams, that I may give
Pulse for pulse, breath for breath:
Speak low, lean low,
As long ago, my love, how long ago.

18 *December* 1854.

THE FIRST SPRING DAY

I WONDER if the sap is stirring yet,
If wintry birds are dreaming of a mate,
If frozen snowdrops feel as yet the sun
And crocus fires are kindling one by one:
Sing, robin, sing;
I still am sore in doubt concerning Spring.

I wonder if the Springtide of this year
Will bring another Spring both lost and dear;
If heart and spirit will find out their Spring,
Or if the world alone will bud and sing:
Sing, hope, to me;
Sweet notes, my hope, soft notes for memory.

The sap will surely quicken soon or late,
The tardiest bird will twitter to a mate;

So Spring must dawn again with
warmth and bloom,
Or in this world or in the world to
come:
Sing, voice of Spring,
Till I too blossom and rejoice and
sing.

1 *March* 1855.

MY DREAM

HEAR now a curious dream I dreamed
last night,
Each word whereof is weighed and
sifted truth.

I stood beside Euphrates while it
swelled
Like overflowing Jordan in its youth.
It waxed and coloured sensibly to
sight;
Till out of myriad pregnant waves
there welled
Young crocodiles, a gaunt blunt-
featured crew,
Fresh-hatched perhaps and daubed
with birthday dew.
The rest if I should tell, I fear my
friend,
My closest friend, would deem the
facts untrue;
And therefore it were wisely left
untold;
Yet if you will, why, hear it to the
end.

Each crocodile was girt with massive
gold
And polished stones that with their
wearers grew:
But one there was who waxed be-
yond the rest,
Wore kinglier girdle and a kingly
crown,
Whilst crowns and orbs and sceptres
starred his breast.
All gleamed compact and green with
scale on scale,
But special burnishment adorned his
mail
And special terror weighed upon his
frown;
His punier brethren quaked before
his tail,
Broad as a rafter, potent as a flail.
So he grew lord and master of his
kin:
But who shall tell the tale of all
their woes?
An execrable appetite arose,
He battened on them, crunched, and
sucked them in.
He knew no law, he feared no
binding law,
But ground them with inexorable
jaw.
The luscious fat distilled upon his
chin,
Exuded from his nostrils and his
eyes,
While still like hungry death he fed
his maw;
Till, every minor crocodile being
dead
And buried too, himself gorged to
the full,
He slept with breath oppressed and
unstrung claw.

Oh marvel passing strange which
next I saw!
In sleep he dwindled to the common
size,
And all the empire faded from his
coat.
Then from far off a wingèd vessel
came,
Swift as a swallow, subtle as a flame:

I know not what it bore of freight
or host,
But white it was as an avenging
ghost.
It levelled strong Euphrates in its
course;
Supreme yet weightless as an idle
mote
It seemed to tame the waters without
force
Till not a murmur swelled or billow
beat.
Lo, as the purple shadow swept the
sands,
The prudent crocodile rose on his
feet,
And shed appropriate tears and
wrung his hands.

What can it mean? you ask. I
answer not
For meaning, but myself must echo,
What?
And tell it as I saw it on the spot.

9 *March* 1855.

THE LAST LOOK

HER face was like an opening rose,
So bright to look upon:
But now it is like fallen snows,
As cold, as dead, as wan.

Heaven lit with stars is more like
her
Than is this empty crust:
Deaf, dumb, and blind, it cannot stir,
But crumbles back to dust.

No flower be taken from her bed
For me, no lock be shorn:
I give her up, the early dead,
The dead, the newly born.

If I remember her, no need
Of formal tokens set;
Of hollow token-lies indeed
No need, if I forget.

23 *March* 1855.

I HAVE A MESSAGE UNTO THEE

(WRITTEN IN SICKNESS)

GREEN sprout the grasses,
Red blooms the mossy rose,
Blue nods the harebell
Where purple heather blows:
The water-lily, silver white,
Is living fair as light:

Sweet jasmine-branches trail
A dusky starry veil:
Each goodly is to see,
Comely in its degree:
I, only I, alas that this should be,
Am ruinously pale.

New year renews the grasses,
The crimson rose renews,
Brings up the breezy bluebell,
Refreshes heath with dews:
Then water-lilies ever
Bud fresh upon the river:
Then jasmine lights its star
And spreads its arms afar:
I only in my spring
Can neither bud nor sing:
I find not honey but a sting
Though fair the blossoms are.

For me no downy grasses,
For me no blossoms pluck:
But leave them for the breezes
For honey-bees to suck,
For childish hands to pull
And pile their baskets full.

I will not have a crown
That soon must be laid down:
Trust me: I cannot care
A withering crown to wear,
I who may be immortally made fair
Where autumn turns not brown.

Spring, summer, autumn,
Winter, all will pass,
With tender blossoms
And with fruitful grass.
Sweet days of yore
Will pass to come no more,
Sweet perfumes fly,
Buds languish and go by:
O bloom that cannot last,
O blossoms quite gone past,
I yet shall feast when you shall fast,
And live when you shall die.

Your work-day fully ended,
Your pleasant task being done,
You shall finish with the stars,
The moon and setting sun.
You and these and time
Shall end with the last chime,—
For earthly solace given,
But needed not in heaven;
Needed not perhaps
Through the eternal lapse.
Or else, all signs fulfilled,
What you foreshow may yield
Delights through heaven's own harvest field
With undecaying saps.

A blessing on the flowers
That God has made so good,
From crops of jealous gardens
To wildlings of a wood.
They show us symbols deep
Of how to sow and reap:
They teach us lessons plain
Of patient harvest-gain.
They still are telling of
God's unimagined love:—
'Oh gift,' they say, 'all gifts above,
Shall it be given in vain?

'Better you had not seen us
But shared the blind man's night,
Better you had not scented
Our incense of delight,
Than only plucked to scorn
The rosebud for its thorn:
Not so the instinctive thrush
Hymns in a holly-bush.
Be wise betimes, and with the bee
Suck sweets from prickly tree,
To last when earth's are flown:
So God well pleased will own
Your work, and bless not time alone
But ripe eternity.'

26 *March* 1855.

COBWEBS

It is a land with neither night nor day,
Nor heat nor cold, nor any wind nor rain,
Nor hills nor valleys: but one even plain
Stretches through long unbroken miles away,
While through the sluggish air a twilight grey
Broodeth: no moons or seasons wax and wane,
No ebb and flow are there along the main,
No bud-time, no leaf-falling, there for aye:—
No ripple on the sea, no shifting sand,
No beat of wings to stir the stagnant space:

No pulse of life through all the loveless land
And loveless sea; no trace of days before,
No guarded home, no toil-won resting-place,
No future hope, no fear for evermore.

October 1855.

MAY

I CANNOT tell you how it was;
But this I know: it came to pass—
Upon a bright and breezy day
When May was young, ah pleasant May!
As yet the poppies were not born
Between the blades of tender corn;
The last eggs had not hatched as yet,
Nor any bird forgone its mate.

I cannot tell you what it was;
But this I know: it did but pass.
It passed away with sunny May,
With all sweet things it passed away,
And left me old, and cold, and grey.

20 *November* 1855.

AN AFTER-THOUGHT

OH lost garden Paradise!—
Were the roses redder there
Than they blossom otherwhere?
Was the night's delicious shade
More intensely star-inlaid?
Who can tell what memories
Of lost beloved Paradise
Saddened Eve with sleepless eyes?
Fair first mother lulled to rest
In a choicer garden-nest,
Curtained with a softer shading
Than thy tenderest child is laid in,—
Was the sundawn brighter far
Than our daily sundawns are?
Was that love, first love of all,
Warmer, deeper, better worth,
Than has warmed poor hearts of earth
Since the utter ruinous fall?

Ah supremely happy once,
Ah supremely broken-hearted
When her tender feet departed
From the accustomed paths of peace!
Catching Angel orisons
For the last last time of all,
Shedding tears that would not cease
For the bitter fall.

Yet the accustomed hand for leading,
Yet the accustomed heart for love:
Sure she kept one part of Eden
Angels could not strip her of.
Sure the fiery messenger
Kindling for his outraged Lord,
Willing with the perfect Will,
Yet rejoiced the flaming sword,
Chastening sore but sparing still,
Shut her treasure out with her.

What became of Paradise?
Did the cedars droop at all
(Springtide hastening to the fall)
Missing the beloved hand—
Or did their green perfection stand
Unmoved beneath the perfect skies?—

'aradise was rapt on high,
It lies before the gate of Heaven :—
Eve now slumbers there forgiven,
Slumbers Rachel comforted,
Slumber all the blessed dead
)f days and months and years gone by,
A solemn swelling company.

'hey wait for us beneath the trees
)f Paradise, that lap of ease :
'hey wait for us, till God shall please.
)h come the day of death, that day
)f rest which cannot pass away !
Vhen the last work is wrought, the last
'ang of pain is felt and past,
Ind the blessed door made fast.

18 *December* 1855.

TO THE END

'HERE are lilies for her sisters—
(Who so cold as they ?)—
Ind heartsease for one I must not name
When I am far away.
shall pluck the lady lilies
And fancy all the rest :
shall pluck the bright-eyed heartsease
For her sake I love the best :
As I wander on with weary feet
Toward the twilight shadowy west.

O bird that flyest eastward
Unto that sunny land,
)h wilt thou light on lilies white
Beside her whiter hand ?
Soft summer wind that breathest
Of perfumes and sweet spice,
Ah tell her what I dare not tell
Of watchful waiting eyes,
Of love that yet may meet again
In distant Paradise.

I go from earth to heaven
A dim uncertain road,
A houseless pilgrim through the world
Unto a sure abode :
While evermore an Angel
Goes with me day and night,
A ministering spirit
From the land of light,
My holy fellow-servant sent
To guide my steps aright.

I wonder if the Angels
Love with such love as ours,
If for each other's sake they pluck
And keep eternal flowers.
Alone I am and weary,
Alone yet not alone :
Her soul talks with me by the way
From tedious stone to stone,
A blessed Angel treads with me
The awful paths unknown.

When will the long road end in rest,
The sick bird perch and brood ?
When will my Guardian fold his wings
At rest in the finished good ?
Lulling, lulling me off to sleep :
While Death's strong hand doth roll
My sins behind his back,
And my life up like a scroll,
Till through sleep I hear kind Angels
Rejoicing at the goal.

If her spirit went before me
Up from night to day,
It would pass me like the lightning
That kindles on its way.

I should feel it like the lightning
Flashing fresh from heaven:
I should long for heaven sevenfold more,
Yea and sevenfold seven:
Should pray as I have not prayed before,
And strive as I have not striven.

She will learn new love in heaven,
Who is so full of love;
She will learn new depths of tenderness
Who is tender like a dove.
Her heart will no more sorrow,
Her eyes will weep no more:
Yet it may be she will yearn
And look back from far before:
Lingering on the golden threshold
And leaning from the door.

18 *December* 1855.

MAY

'SWEET Life is dead.'—'Not so:
I meet him day by day,
Where bluest fountains flow
And trees are white as snow,
For it is time of May.
Even now from long ago
He will not say me nay.
He is most fair to see:
And if I wander forth, I know
He wanders forth with me.'

'But Life is dead to me:
The worn-out year was failing,
West winds took up a wailing
To watch his funeral:
Bare poplars shivered tall
And lank vines stretched to see.
'Twixt him and me a wall
Was frozen of earth-like stone
With brambles overgrown:
Chill darkness wrapped him like a pall,
And I am left alone.'

'How can you call him dead?
He buds out everywhere:
In every hedgerow rank,
On every moss-grown bank,
I find him here and there.
He crowns my willing head
With May-flowers white and red,
He rears my tender heartsease bed:
He makes my branch to bud and bear,
And blossoms where I tread.

31 *December* 1855.

SHUT OUT

THE door was shut. I looked between
Its iron bars; and saw it lie,
My garden, mine, beneath the sky
Pied with all flowers bedewed and green.

From bough to bough the song-bird crossed,
From flower to flower the moth and bees:
With all its nests and stately trees
It had been mine, and it was lost.

A shadowless spirit kept the gate,
Blank and unchanging like the grave.
I, peering through, said; 'Let me have
Some buds to cheer my outcast state.'

e answered not. 'Or give me, then,
But one small twig from shrub or tree ;.
And bid my home remember me
ntil I come to it again.'

he spirit was silent ; but he took
Mortar and stone to build a wall ;
He left no loophole great or small
hrough which my straining eyes might look.

› now I sit here quite alone,
Blinded with tears ; nor grieve for that,
For nought is left worth looking at
nce my delightful land is gone.

violet bed is budding near,
Wherein a lark has made her nest ;
And good they are, but not the best ;
nd dear they are, but not so dear.
20 *January* 1856.

BY THE WATER

HERE are rivers lapsing down
Lily-laden to the sea :
very lily is a boat
For bees, one, two, or three :
wish there were a fairy boat
For you, my friend, and me.

nd if there were a fairy boat
And if the river bore us,
e should not care for all the past
Nor all that lies before us,
›t for the hopes that buoyed us once,
Not for the fears that tore us.

e would rock upon the river
Scarcely floating by,
Rocking, rocking like the lilies,
You, my friend, and I :
Rocking like the stately lilies
Beneath the statelier sky.

But ah where is that river
Whose hyacinth banks descend
Down to the sweeter lilies
Till soft their shadows blend
Into a watery twilight ?—
And ah where is my friend ?
7 *February* 1856.

A CHILLY NIGHT

I ROSE at the dead of night,
And went to the lattice alone
To look for my Mother's ghost
Where the ghostly moonlight shone.

My friends had failed one by one,
Middle-aged, young, and old,
Till the ghosts were warmer to me
Than my friends that had grown cold.

I looked and I saw the ghosts
Dotting plain and mound :
They stood in the blank moonlight,
But no shadow lay on the ground :
They spoke without a voice
And they leaped without a sound.

I called : 'O my Mother dear,'—
I sobbed : 'O my Mother kind,
Make a lonely bed for me
And shelter it from the wind.

'Tell the others not to come
To see me night or day :
But I need not tell my friends
To be sure to keep away.'

My Mother raised her eyes,
They were blank and could not see:
Yet they held me with their stare
While they seemed to look at me.

She opened her mouth and spoke;
I could not hear a word,
While my flesh crept on my bones
And every hair was stirred.

She knew that I could not hear
The message that she told
Whether I had long to wait
Or soon should sleep in the mould:
I saw her toss her shadowless hair
And wring her hands in the cold.

I strained to catch her words,
And she strained to make me hear;
But never a sound of words
Fell on my straining ear.

From midnight to the cockcrow
I kept my watch in pain
While the subtle ghosts grew subtler
In the sad night on the wane.

From midnight to the cockcrow
I watched till all were gone,
Some to sleep in the shifting sea
And some under turf and stone:
Living had failed and dead had failed,
And I was indeed alone.

11 *February* 1856.

LET PATIENCE HAVE HER PERFECT WORK

I saw a bird alone,
In its nest it sat alone,
For its mate was dead or flown
Though it was early Spring.
Hard by were buds half-blown,
With cornfields freshly sown:
It could only perch and moan
That used to sing:
Droop in sorrow left alone:
A sad sad thing.

I saw a star alone,
In blue heaven it hung alone,
A solitary throne
In the waste of space:
Where no moon-glories are,
Where not a second star
Beams through night from near or far
To that lone place.
Its beauties all unknown,
Its glories all alone,
Sad in heaven's face.

Doth the bird desire a mate,
Pine for a second mate,
Whose first joy was so great
With its own dove?
Doth the star supreme in night
Desire a second light
To make it seem less bright
In the shrine of heavenly height
That is above?—

Ah better wait alone,
In nest or heaven alone,
Forsaken or unknown:
Till, time being past and gone,
Full eternity rolls on,
While patience reaps what it has sown
In the harvest-land of love.

12 *March* 1856.

IN THE LANE

When my love came home to me,
Pleasant summer bringing,
Every tree was out in leaf,
Every bird was singing.

here I met her in the lane
By those waters gleamy,
let her toward the fall of day,
Warm and dear and dreamy.
id I loiter in the lane?
None was there to see me.

nly roses in the hedge,
Lilies on the river,
aw our greeting fast and fond,
Counted gift and giver,
aw me take her to my home,
Take her home for ever.

3 *May* 1856.

ACME

LEEP, unforgotten sorrow, sleep awhile:
Make even awhile as though I might forget;
Let the wound staunch thy tedious fingers fret,
ill once again I look abroad and smile,
Varmed in the sunlight: let no tears defile
This hour's content, no conscious thorns beset
My path: O sorrow, slumber, slumber yet
moment, rouse not yet the smouldering pile.
shalt thou wake again with added strength,
O unforgotten sorrow, stir again
The slackening fire, refine the lulling pain
To quickened torture and a subtler edge.
The wrung cord snaps at last: beneath the wedge
e toughest oak groans long but rends at length.

May 1856.

A BED OF FORGET-ME-NOTS

Is Love so prone to change and rot
We are fain to rear Forget-me-not
By measure in a garden-plot?—

I love its growth at large and free
By untrod path and unlopped tree,
Or nodding by the unpruned hedge,
Or on the water's dangerous edge
Where flags and meadowsweet blow rank
With rushes on the quaking bank.

Love is not taught in learning's school,
Love is not parcelled out by rule:
Hath curb or call an answer got?—
So free must be Forget-me-not.
Give me the flame no dampness dulls,
The passion of the instinctive pulse,
Love steadfast as a fixèd star,
Tender as doves with nestlings are,
More large than time, more strong than death:
This all creation travails of—
She groans not for a passing breath—
This is Forget-me-not and Love.

17 *June* 1856.

LOOK ON THIS PICTURE AND ON THIS

I WISH we once were wedded,—
then I must be true:
You should hold my will in yours to do or to undo:
But I hate myself now, Eva, when I look at you.

You have seen her hazel eyes, her warm dark skin,
Dark hair—but oh those hazel eyes a devil is dancing in :—
You, my saint, lead up to heaven, she lures down to sin.

She's so redundant, stately :—in truth now have you seen
Ever anywhere such beauty, such a stature, such a mien ?
She may be queen of devils, but she's every inch a queen.

If you sing to me, I hear her subtler sweeter still
Whispering in each tender cadence strangely sweet to fill
All that lacks in music, all my soul and sense and will.

But you ask, 'Why struggle ? I have given you up :
Take again your pledges, snap the cord and break the cup :
Feast you with your temptation, for I in heaven will sup.'

Can I bear to think upon you strong to break not bend,
Pale with inner intense passion, silent to the end,
Bear to leave you, bear to grieve you, O my dove, my friend ?

Listening so, I hide mine eyes and fancy years to come :
You cherished in another home with no cares burdensome :
You straitened in a winding-sheet, pulseless, at peace, and dumb.

Open house and heart, barred to me alone the door :
Children bound to meet her, babies crow before :
Blessed wife and blessed mother whom I may see no more.

Or I fancy — In the grave her comely body lies :
She is 'tiring for the Bridegroom till the morning star shall rise,
Then to shine a glory in the nuptials of the skies.

No more yearning tenderness, no more pale regret :
She will not look for me when the marriage-guests are set,
She joys with joy eternal as we had never met.

I would that one of us were dead, were gone no more to meet,
Or she and I were dead together stretched here at your feet :
That she and I were strained together in one winding-sheet.

How have you the heart to face me with that passion in your stare
Deathly silent ? Weep before me rave at me in your despair :
If you keep patience, wings will spring and a halo from your hair.

See now how proud you are, like us after all, no saint :
Not so upright but that you are bowed with the old bent :
White at white-heat, tainted with the devil's special taint.

id I love you? Never from the
first cold day to this:
ou are not sufficient for my aim of
life, my bliss:
ou are not sufficient, but I found
the one that is.

hen did I never love you?—ah the
sting struck home at last!
You are drooping, fainting, dying
—the worst of death is past—
A light is on your face from the
nearing heaven forecast.

ever?—yes I loved you then: I
loved, the word still charms:
For the first time, last time, lie
here in my heart, my arms,
For the first last time, as if I
shielded you from harms.

or after all I loved you, loved you
then, I love you yet:
sten, love, I love you: see, the
seal of truth is set
On my face, in tears—you cannot
see? then feel them wet.

use at heaven's dear gate, look
back, one moment back to
grieve:
ou go home through death to life:
but I, I still must live:
n the threshold of heaven's love,
O love, can you forgive?—

lly freely fondly, with heart-truth
above an oath,
ith eager utter pardon given un-
asked and nothing loth,
aping coals of fire upon our
heads, forgiving both.

One word more—not one! One
look more—too late, too late!
Lapped in love she sleeps who was
lashed with scorn and hate:
Nestling in the lap of Love the dove
has found a mate.

Night has come, the night of rest:
day will come, that day:
To her glad dawn of glory kindled
from the deathless ray:
To us a searching fire and strict
balances to weigh.

The tearless tender eyes are closed,
the tender lips are dumb—
I shall not see or hear them more
until that day shall come:
Then they must speak; what will
they say?—what then will be
the sum?—

Shall we stand upon the left, and
she upon the right—
We smirched with endless death and
shame, she glorified in white—
Will she sound our accusation in
intolerable light?

12 *July* 1856.

GONE BEFORE

SHE was most like a rose when it
flushes rarest,
She was most like a lily when it
blows fairest,
She was most like a violet sweetest
on the bank:
Now she's only like the snow, cold
and blank,
After the sun sank.

She left us in the early days; she would not linger
For orange blossoms in her hair, or ring on finger:
Did she deem windy grass more good than these?
Now the turf that's between us and the hedging trees
Might as well be seas.

I had trained a branch she shelters not under,
I had reared a flower she snapped asunder:
In the bush and on the stately bough
Birds sing; she who watched them track the plough
Cannot hear them now.

Every bird has a nest hidden somewhere
For itself and its mate and joys that come there,—
Though it soar to the clouds, finding there its rest:
You sang in the height, but no more with eager breast
Stoop to your own nest.

If I could win you back from heaven-gate lofty,
Perhaps you would but grieve, returning softly:
Surely they would miss you in the blessed throng,
Miss your sweet voice in their sweetest song,
Reckon time too long.

Earth is not good enough for you, my sweet, my sweetest;
Life on earth seemed long to you, though to me fleetest;
I would not wish you back if a wish would do:
Only, love, I long for heaven with you,
Heart-pierced through and through.

12 *July* 1856.

THE HOUR AND THE GHOST

BRIDE

O LOVE, love, hold me fast,
He draws me away from thee;
I cannot stem the blast,
Nor the cold strong sea:
Far away a light shines
Beyond the hills and pines;
It is lit for me.

BRIDEGROOM

I have thee close, my dear,
No terror can come near;
Only far off the northern light shines clear.

GHOST

Come with me, fair and false,
To our home, come home.
It is my voice that calls:
Once thou wast not afraid
When I woo'd, and said,
'Come, our nest is newly made'—
Now cross the tossing foam.

BRIDE

Hold me one moment longer!
He taunts me with the past,
His clutch is waxing stronger;
Hold me fast, hold me fast.
He draws me from thy heart,
And I cannot withhold:
He bids my spirit depart

Vith him into the cold :—
)h bitter vows of old !

BRIDEGROOM

.ean on me, hide thine eyes :
)nly ourselves, earth and skies,
.re present here : be wise.

GHOST

.ean on me, come away,
will guide and steady :
Come, for I will not stay :
Come, for house and bed are ready.
.h sure bed and house,
For better and worse, for life and death,
Goal won with shortened breath !
Come, crown our vows.

BRIDE

)ne moment, one more word,
While my heart beats still,
While my breath is stirred
y my fainting will.
friend, forsake me not,
Forget not as I forgot :
ut keep thy heart for me,
Keep thy faith true and bright ;
Through the lone cold winter night
erhaps I may come to thee.

BRIDEGROOM

Jay peace, my darling, peace :
et these dreams and terrors cease :
Who spoke of death or change or aught but ease ?

GHOST

fair frail sin,
poor harvest gathered in !
hou shalt visit him again
o watch his heart grow cold :
To know the gnawing pain
I knew of old ;
To see one much more fair
Fill up the vacant chair,
Fill his heart, his children bear ;
While thou and I together,
In the outcast weather,
Toss and howl and spin.

11 *September* 1856.

LIGHT LOVE

'Oh sad thy lot before I came,
But sadder when I go,—
My presence but a flash of flame,
A transitory glow
Between two barren wastes like snow.
What wilt thou do when I am gone ?
Where wilt thou rest, my dear ?
For cold thy bed to rest upon,
And cold the falling year
Whose withered leaves are lost and sere.'

She hushed the baby at her breast :
She rocked it on her knee :
'And I will rest my lonely rest,
Warmed with the thought of thee,
Rest lulled to rest by memory.'
She hushed the baby with her kiss,
She hushed it with her breast :
'Is death so sadder much than this ?
Sure death that builds a nest
For those who elsewhere cannot rest.'

'Oh sad thy note, my mateless dove,
With tender nestling cold :
But hast thou ne'er another love
Left from the days of old
To build thy nest of silk and gold ?

To warm thy paleness to a blush
When I am far away,—
To warm thy coldness to a flush
And turn thee back to May,
And turn thy twilight back to day.'

She did not answer him a word,
But leaned her face aside,
Sick with the pain of hope deferred
And sore with wounded pride:
He knew his very soul had lied.
She strained his baby in her arms,
His baby to her heart:
'Even let it go, the love that harms;
We two will never part:
Mine own, his own, how dear thou art!'

'Now never tease me, tender-eyed,
Sigh-voiced,' he said in scorn:
'For nigh at hand there blooms a bride,
My bride before the morn:
Ripe-blooming she, as thou forlorn.
Ripe-blooming she, my rose, my peach:
She wooes me day and night:
I watch her tremble in my reach:
She reddens, my delight,
She ripens, reddens, in my sight.'

'And is she like a sunlit rose?
Am I like withered leaves?
Haste where thy spicèd garden blows:
But in bare autumn eves
Wilt thou have store of harvest-sheaves?
Thou leavest love, true love behind,
To seek a love as true:
Go seek in haste,—but wilt thou find?
Change new again for new,
Pluck up, enjoy, yea trample too.

'Alas for her, poor faded rose,
Alas for her like me,
Cast down and trampled in the snows.'—
'Like thee? nay not like thee:
She leans, but from a guarded tree.
Farewell, and dream as long ago
Before we ever met:
Farewell: my swift-paced horse seems slow.'—
She raised her eyes, not wet
But hard, to Heaven: 'Dost Thou forget?'

28 *October* 1856.

DOWNCAST

THESE roses are as perfect as of old,
Those lilies wear their selfsame sunny white;
I, only I, am changed and sad and cold.
The morning star still glorifies the night,
And musical that fountain in its swell
Casts as of old its waters to the light.
Oh that I were a rose, so I might dwell
Contented in a garden on my thorn,
Fulfilling mine appointed fragrance well;
Or stainless lily in the summer morn—
Though no man pluck it, yet the honey-bee
Knows it for sweetness in its bosom born.
Or that I were a star, from sea to sea

Guiding the seekers to their port of rest,
Guiding them till night's shuffling shadows flee;
Or that I were a spring to which, oppressed
With desert drought, some wearied wayfarer
Comes from the barren regions of the West.
Then should I stand at peace, and should not err,
Or lighten and make beautiful the sky,
Or make more glad than frankincense and myrrh.
But now it is not so: I, only I,
Am changed and sad and cold, while in my soul
The very fountain of delight is dry.

12 *December* 1856.

A TRIAD

THREE sang of love together: one with lips
Crimson, with cheeks and bosom in a glow,
Flushed to the yellow hair and finger-tips;
And one there sang who soft and smooth as snow
Bloomed like a tinted hyacinth at a show;
And one was blue with famine after love,
Who like a harpstring snapped rang harsh and low
The burden of what those were singing of.
One shamed herself in love; one temperately
Grew gross in soulless love, a sluggish wife;
One famished died for love. Thus two of three
Took death for love and won him after strife;
One droned in sweetness like a fattened bee:
All on the threshold, yet all short of life.

18 *December* 1856.

LOVE FROM THE NORTH

I HAD a love in soft south land,
Beloved through April far in May;
He waited on my lightest breath,
And never dared to say me nay.

He saddened if my cheer was sad,
But gay he grew if I was gay;
We never differed on a hair,
My yes his yes, my nay his nay.

The wedding hour was come, the aisles
Were flushed with sun and flowers that day;
I pacing balanced in my thoughts:
'It's quite too late to think of nay.'—

My bridegroom answered in his turn,
Myself had almost answered 'yea:'
When through the flashing nave I heard
A struggle and resounding 'nay.'

Bridemaids and bridegroom shrank in fear,
But I stood high who stood at bay:

'And if I answer yea, fair Sir,
What man art thou to bar with nay?'

He was a strong man from the north,
Light-locked, with eyes of dangerous grey:
'Put yea by for another time
In which I will not say thee nay.'

He took me in his strong white arms,
He bore me on his horse away
O'er crag, morass, and hairbreadth pass,
But never asked me yea or nay.

He made me fast with book and bell,
With links of love he makes me stay;
Till now I've neither heart nor power
Nor will nor wish to say him nay.
19 *December* 1856.

IN AN ARTIST'S STUDIO

ONE face looks out from all his canvases,
One selfsame figure sits or walks or leans:
We found her hidden just behind those screens,
That mirror gave back all her loveliness.
A queen in opal or in ruby dress,
A nameless girl in freshest summer-greens,
A saint, an angel—every canvas means
The same one meaning, neither more nor less.
He feeds upon her face by day and night,
And she with true kind eyes looks back on him,
Fair as the moon and joyful as the light:
Not wan with waiting, not with sorrow dim;
Not as she is, but was when hope shone bright;
Not as she is, but as she fills his dream.
24 *December* 1856.

FATA MORGANA

A BLUE-EYED phantom far before
Is laughing, leaping toward the sun:
Like lead I chase it evermore,
I pant and run.

It breaks the sunlight bound on bound:
Goes singing as it leaps along
To sheep-bells with a dreamy sound
A dreamy song.

I laugh, it is so brisk and gay;
It is so far before, I weep:
I hope I shall lie down some day,
Lie down and sleep.
18 *April* 1857.

ONE DAY

I WILL tell you when they met:
In the limpid days of Spring;
Elder boughs were budding yet,
Oaken boughs looked wintry still,
But primrose and veined violet
In the mossful turf were set,
While meeting birds made haste to sing
And build with right good will.

I will tell you when they parted ;
When plenteous Autumn sheaves were brown
Then they parted heavy-hearted ;
The full rejoicing sun looked down
As grand as in the days before ;
Only they had lost a crown ;
Only to them those days of yore
Could come back nevermore.

When shall they meet? I cannot tell,
Indeed, when they shall meet again,
Except some day in Paradise :
For this they wait, one waits in pain.
Beyond the sea of death Love lies
For ever, yesterday, to-day ;
Angels shall ask them, 'Is it well?'
And they shall answer 'Yea.'

6 *June* 1857.

INTROSPECTIVE

I WISH it were over the terrible pain,
Pang after pang again and again :
First the shattering ruining blow,
Then the probing steady and slow.

Did I wince? I did not faint :
My soul broke but was not bent :
Up I stand like a blasted tree
By the shore of the shivering sea.

On my boughs neither leaf nor fruit,
No sap in my uttermost root,
Brooding in an anguish dumb
On the short past and the long to-come.

Dumb I was when the ruin fell,
Dumb I remain and will never tell ;
O my soul, I talk with thee,
But not another the sight must see.

I did not start when the torture stung,
I did not faint when the torture wrung :
Let it come tenfold if come it must,
But I will not groan when I bite the dust.

30 *June* 1857.

A PEAL OF BELLS

STRIKE the bells wantonly,
Tinkle tinkle well ;
Bring me wine, bring me flowers,
Ring the silver bell.
All my lamps burn scented oil,
Hung on laden orange-trees,
Whose shadowed foliage is the foil
To golden lamps and oranges.
Heap my golden plates with fruit,
Golden fruit, fresh-plucked and ripe ;
Strike the bells and breathe the pipe ;
Shut out showers from summer hours—
Silence that complaining lute—
Shut out thinking, shut out pain,
From hours that cannot come again.

Strike the bells solemnly,
Ding dong deep :
My friend is passing to his bed,
Fast asleep ;
There's plaited linen round his head,
While foremost go his feet—
His feet that cannot carry him.
My feast's a show, my lights are dim ;
Be still, your music is not sweet,—
There is no music more for him.
His lights are out, his feast is done :

His bowl that sparkled to the brim
Is drained, is broken, cannot hold ;
My blood is chill, his blood is cold ;
His death is full, and mine begun.
7 July 1857.

IN THE ROUND TOWER AT JHANSI

8 JUNE 1857

A HUNDRED, a thousand to one ; even so ;
Not a hope in the world remained :
The swarming howling wretches below
Gained and gained and gained.

Skene looked at his pale young wife.
'Is the time come ?'—'The time is come.'
Young, strong, and so full of life,
The agony struck them dumb.

Close his arm about her now,
Close her cheek to his,
Close the pistol to her brow—
God forgive them this !

'Will it hurt much ?'—'No, mine own :
I wish I could bear the pang for both.'—
'I wish I could bear the pang alone :
Courage, dear, I am not loth.'

Kiss and kiss : 'It is not pain
Thus to kiss and die.
One kiss more.'—'And yet one again.'—
'Good-bye.'—'Good-bye.'
September 1857.

DAY-DREAMS

GAZING through her chamber window
Sits my soul's dear soul :
Looking northward, looking southward,
Looking to the goal,
Looking back without control.

I have strewn thy path, beloved,
With plumed meadowsweet,
Iris and pale perfumed lilies,
Roses most complete :
Wherefore pause on listless feet ?

But she sits and never answers,
Gazing, gazing still
On swift fountain, shadowed valley,
Cedared sunlit hill :
Who can guess or read her will ?

Who can guess or read the spirit
Shrined within her eyes,
Part a longing, part a languor,
Part a mere surprise,
While slow mists do rise and rise ?

Is it love she looks and longs for,
Is it rest or peace,
Is it slumber self-forgetful
In its utter ease,
Is it one or all of these ?

So she sits and doth not answer
With her dreaming eyes,
With her languid look delicious,
Almost paradise,
Less than happy, over-wise.

Answer me, O self-forgetful—
Or of what beside ?
Is it day-dream of a maiden,
Vision of a bride,
Is it knowledge, love, or pride ?

Cold she sits through all my kindling,
Deaf to all I pray:
I have wasted might and wisdom,
Wasted night and day:
Deaf she dreams to all I say.

Now if I could guess her secret,
Were it worth the guess?—
Time is lessening, hope is lessening,
Love grows less and less:
What care I for no or yes?

I will give her stately burial,
Though, when she lies dead:
For dear memory of the past time,
Of her royal head,
Of the much I strove and said.

I will give her stately burial,
Stately willow-branches bent:
Have her carved in alabaster,
As she dreamed and leant
While I wondered what she meant.

8 *September* 1857.

A NIGHTMARE

FRAGMENT

I HAVE a friend in ghostland—
Early found, ah me how early lost!—
Blood-red seaweeds drip along that coastland
By the strong sea wrenched and tost.

. . . . . .

If I wake he hunts me like a nightmare:
I feel my hair stand up, my body creep:
Without light I see a blasting sight there,
See a secret I must keep.

12 *September* 1857.

ANOTHER SPRING

IF I might see another Spring,
I'd not plant summer flowers and wait:
I'd have my crocuses at once,
My leafless pink mezereons,
My chill-veined snowdrops, choicer yet
My white or azure violet,
Leaf-nested primrose; anything
To blow at once, not late.

If I might see another Spring,
I'd listen to the daylight birds
That build their nests and pair and sing,
Nor wait for mateless nightingale;
I'd listen to the lusty herds,
The ewes with lambs as white as snow,
I'd find out music in the hail
And all the winds that blow.

If I might see another Spring—
Oh stinging comment on my past
That all my past results in 'if'—
If I might see another Spring
I'd laugh to-day, to-day is brief;
I would not wait for anything:
I'd use to-day that cannot last,
Be glad to-day and sing.

15 *September* 1857.

FOR ONE SAKE

ONE passed me like a flash of lightning by,
To ring clear bells of heaven beyond the stars.
Then said I: Wars and rumours of your wars

Are dull with din of what and where
and why :
My heart is where these troubles
draw not nigh :
Let me alone till heaven shall
burst its bars,
Break up its fountains, roll its
flashing cars
Earthwards with fire to test and
purify.
Let me alone to-night, and one night
more
Of which I shall not count the
eventide :
Its morrow will not be as days
before.
Let me alone to dream, perhaps to
weep :
To dream of her the imperishable
bride,
Dream while I wake and dream on
while I sleep.

25 *October* 1857.

MEMORY

I

I NURSED it in my bosom while it
lived,
I hid it in my heart when it was
dead.
In joy I sat alone; even so I grieved
Alone, and nothing said.

I shut the door to face the naked
truth,
I stood alone—I faced the truth
alone,
Stripped bare of self-regard or forms
or ruth
Till first and last were shown.

I took the perfect balances and
weighed ;
No shaking of my hand disturbed
the poise ;
Weighed, found it wanting : not a
word I said,
But silent made my choice.

None know the choice I made ; I
make it still.
None know the choice I made
and broke my heart,
Breaking mine idol : I have braced
my will
Once, chosen for once my part.

I broke it at a blow, I laid it cold,
Crushed in my deep heart where
it used to live.
My heart dies inch by inch ; the
time grows old,
Grows old in which I grieve.

8 *November* 1857.

II

I have a room whereinto no one
enters
Save I myself alone :
There sits a blessed memory on
a throne,
There my life centres ;

While winter comes and goes—oh
tedious comer !—
And while its nip-wind blows ;
While bloom the bloodless lily
and warm rose
Of lavish summer.

If any should force entrance he
might see there
One buried yet not dead,
Before whose face I no more bow
my head
Or bend my knee there ;

But often in my worn life's autumn weather
I watch there with clear eyes,
And think how it will be in Paradise
When we're together.

17 *February* 1865.

A BIRTHDAY

My heart is like a singing bird
Whose nest is in a watered shoot:
My heart is like an apple-tree
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit;
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these
Because my love is come to me.

Raise me a dais of silk and down;
Hang it with vair and purple dyes;
Carve it in doves and pomegranates,
And peacocks with a hundred eyes;
Work it in gold and silver grapes,
In leaves and silver fleurs-de-lys;
Because the birthday of my life
Is come, my love is come to me.

18 *November* 1857.

AN APPLE GATHERING

I PLUCKED pink blossoms from mine apple-tree
And wore them all that evening in my hair:
Then in due season when I went to see
I found no apples there.

With dangling basket all along the grass
As I had come I went the self-same track:
My neighbours mocked me while they saw me pass
So empty-handed back.

Lilian and Lilias smiled in trudging by,
Their heaped-up basket teazed me like a jeer;
Sweet-voiced they sang beneath the sunset sky,
Their mother's home was near.

Plump Gertrude passed me with her basket full,
A stronger hand than hers helped it along;
A voice talked with her through the shadows cool
More sweet to me than song.

Ah Willie, Willie, was my love less worth
Than apples with their green leaves piled above?
I counted rosiest apples on the earth
Of far less worth than love.

So once it was with me you stooped to talk
Laughing and listening in this very lane;
To think that by this way we used to walk
We shall not walk again!

I let my neighbours pass me, ones and twos
And groups; the latest said the night grew chill,

And hastened: but I loitered; while
the dews
Fell fast I loitered still.
23 *November* 1857.

WINTER: MY SECRET

I TELL my secret? No indeed, not I:
Perhaps some day, who knows?
But not to-day; it froze, and blows,
and snows,
And you're too curious: fie!
You want to hear it? well:
Only, my secret's mine, and I won't
tell.

Or, after all, perhaps there's none:
Suppose there is no secret after all,
But only just my fun.
To-day's a nipping day, a biting day;
In which one wants a shawl,
A veil, a cloak, and other wraps:
I cannot ope to every one who taps,
And let the draughts come whistling
through my hall;
Come bounding and surrounding me,
Come buffeting, astounding me,
Nipping and clipping through my
wraps and all.
I wear my mask for warmth: who
ever shows
His nose to Russian snows
To be pecked at by every wind that
blows?
You would not peck? I thank you
for good will,
Believe, but leave that truth un-
tested still.

Spring's an expansive time: yet I
don't trust
March with its peck of dust,
Nor April with its rainbow-crowned
brief showers,
Nor even May, whose flowers
One frost may wither through the
sunless hours.

Perhaps some languid summer day,
When drowsy birds sing less and
less,
And golden fruit is ripening to excess,
If there's not too much sun nor too
much cloud,
And the warm wind is neither still
nor loud,
Perhaps my secret I may say,
Or you may guess.
23 *November* 1857.

MY FRIEND

Two days ago with dancing glancing
hair,
With living lips and eyes;
Now pale, dumb, blind, she lies;
So pale, yet still so fair.

We have not left her yet, not yet
alone;
But soon must leave her where
She will not miss our care,
Bone of our bone.

Weep not; O friends, we should
not weep:
Our friend of friends lies full of
rest;
No sorrow rankles in her breast,
Fallen fast asleep.

She sleeps below,
She wakes and laughs above.
To-day, as she walked, let us
walk in love:
To-morrow follow so.
8 *December* 1857.

MAUDE CLARE

UT of the church she followed them
With a lofty step and mien:
is bride was like a village maid,
Maude Clare was like a queen.

Son Thomas,' his lady mother said,
With smiles, almost with tears:
May Nell and you but live as true
As we have done for years;

Your father thirty years ago
Had just your tale to tell;
ut he was not so pale as you,
Nor I so pale as Nell.'

y lord was pale with inward strife,
And Nell was pale with pride;
y lord gazed long on pale Maude Clare
Or ever he kissed the bride.

Lo, I have brought my gift, my lord,
Have brought my gift,' she said:
To bless the hearth, to bless the board,
To bless the marriage-bed.

Here's my half of the golden chain
You wore about your neck,
at day we waded ankle-deep
For lilies in the beck.

ere's my half of the faded leaves
We plucked from budding bough,
th feet amongst the lily leaves,—
The lilies are budding now.'

strove to match her scorn with scorn,
He faltered in his place:
dy,' he said,—'Maude Clare,' he said,—
Maude Clare':—and hid his face.

She turned to Nell: 'My Lady Nell,
I have a gift for you;
Though, were it fruit, the bloom were gone,
Or, were it flowers, the dew.

'Take my share of a fickle heart,
Mine of a paltry love:
Take it or leave it as you will,
I wash my hands thereof.'

'And what you leave,' said Nell,
'I'll take,
And what you spurn I'll wear;
For he's my lord for better and worse,
And him I love, Maude Clare.

'Yea though you're taller by the head,
More wise, and much more fair,
I'll love him till he loves me best—
Me best of all, Maude Clare.'

Towards February 1858.

AUTUMN

I DWELL alone—I dwell alone,
alone,
Whilst full my river flows down to the sea,
Gilded with flashing boats
That bring no friend to me:
O love-songs, gurgling from a hundred throats,
O love-pangs, let me be.

Fair fall the freighted boats which gold and stone
And spices bear to sea:
Slim gleaming maidens swell their mellow notes,
Love-promising, entreating—
Ah sweet but fleeting—

Beneath the shivering, snow-white sails.
Hush! the wind flags and fails—
Hush! they will lie becalmed in sight of strand—
Sight of my strand, where I do dwell alone;
Their songs wake singing echoes in my land—
They cannot hear me moan.

One latest, solitary swallow flies
Across the sea, rough autumn-tempest-tost:
Poor bird, shall it be lost?
Dropped down into this uncongenial sea,
With no kind eyes
To watch it while it dies,
Unguessed, uncared for, free:
Set free at last,
The short pang past,
In sleep, in death, in dreamless sleep locked fast.

Mine avenue is all a growth of oaks,
Some rent by thunder strokes,
Some rustling leaves and acorns in the breeze;
Fair fall my fertile trees,
That rear their goodly heads, and live at ease.

A spider's web blocks all mine avenue;
He catches down and foolish painted flies,
That spider wary and wise.
Each morn it hangs a rainbow strung with dew
Betwixt boughs green with sap,
So fair, few creatures guess it is a trap:
I will not mar the web,
Though sad I am to see the small lives ebb.

It shakes—my trees shake—for wind is roused
In cavern where it housed:
Each white and quivering sail
Of boats among the water leaves
Hollows and strains in the full throated gale:
Each maiden sings again—
Each languid maiden, whom the calm
Had lulled to sleep with rest and spice and balm.
Miles down my river to the sea
They float and wane,
Long miles away from me.

Perhaps they say: 'She grieves,
Uplifted like a beacon on her tower.'
Perhaps they say: 'One hour
More, and we dance among the golden sheaves.'
Perhaps they say: 'One hour More, and we stand,
Face to face, hand in hand;
Make haste, O slack gale, to the looked-for land!'

My trees are not in flower,
I have no bower,
And gusty creaks my tower,
And lonesome, very lonesome, is my strand.

14 *April* 1858.

UP-HILL

DOES the road wind up-hill all the way?
Yes, to the very end.
Will the day's journey take the whole long day?
From morn to night, my friend.

But is there for the night a resting-place?
A roof for when the slow dark hours begin.
May not the darkness hide it from my face?
You cannot miss that inn.

Shall I meet other wayfarers at night?
Those who have gone before.
Then must I knock, or call when just in sight?
They will not keep you standing at that door.

Shall I find comfort, travel-sore and weak?
Of labour you shall find the sum.
Will there be beds for me and all who seek?
Yea, beds for all who come.

29 *June* 1858.

AT HOME

WHEN I was dead, my spirit turned
To seek the much-frequented house.
I passed the door, and saw my friends
Feasting beneath green orange-boughs;
From hand to hand they pushed the wine,
They sucked the pulp of plum and peach;
They sang, they jested, and they laughed,
For each was loved of each.

I listened to their honest chat.
Said one: 'To-morrow we shall be
Plod plod along the featureless sands,
And coasting miles and miles of sea.'
Said one: 'Before the turn of tide
We will achieve the eyrie-seat.'
Said one: 'To-morrow shall be like
To-day, but much more sweet.'

'To-morrow,' said they, strong with hope,
And dwelt upon the pleasant way:
'To-morrow,' cried they one and all,
While no one spoke of yesterday.
Their life stood full at blessed noon;
I, only I, had passed away:
'To-morrow and to-day,' they cried;
I was of yesterday.

I shivered comfortless, but cast
No chill across the tablecloth;
I all-forgotten shivered, sad
To stay and yet to part how loth:
I passed from the familiar room,
I who from love had passed away,
Like the remembrance of a guest
That tarrieth but a day.

29 *June* 1858.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

I

ALL the world is out in leaf,
Half the world in flower,
Earth has waited weeks and weeks

For this special hour:
Faint the rainbow comes and goes
On a sunny shower.

All the world is making love:
Bird to bird in bushes,
Beast to beast in glades, and frog
To frog among the rushes:
Wake, O south wind sweet with spice,
Wake the rose to blushes.

Life breaks forth to right and left—
Pipe wild-wood notes cheery.
Nevertheless there are the dead
Fast asleep and weary—
To-day we live, to-day we love,
Wake and listen, deary.

2

I wish I were dead, my foe,
My friend, I wish I were dead,
With a stone at my tired feet
And a stone at my tired head.

In the pleasant April days
Half the world will stir and sing,
But half the world will slug and rot
For all the sap of Spring.

29 *June* 1858.

THE CONVENT THRESHOLD

THERE's blood between us, love, my love,
There's father's blood, there's brother's blood;
And blood's a bar I cannot pass.
I choose the stairs that mount above,
Stair after golden sky-ward stair,
To city and to sea of glass.

My lily feet are soiled with mud,
With scarlet mud which tells a tale
Of hope that was, of guilt that was,
Of love that shall not yet avail;
Alas, my heart, if I could bare
My heart, this selfsame stain is there
I seek the sea of glass and fire
To wash the spot, to burn the snare
Lo, stairs are meant to lift us higher
Mount with me, mount the kindled stair.

Your eyes look earthward, mine look up.
I see the far-off city grand,
Beyond the hills a watered land,
Beyond the gulf a gleaming strand
Of mansions where the righteous sup;
Who sleep at ease among their trees
Or wake to sing a cadenced hymn
With Cherubim and Seraphim.
They bore the Cross, they drained the cup,
Racked, roasted, crushed, wrenched limb from limb,
They the offscouring of the world:
The heaven of starry heavens unfurled,
The sun before their face is dim.

You looking earthward, what see you?
Milk-white, wine-flushed among the vines,
Up and down leaping, to and fro,
Most glad, most full, made strong with wines,
Blooming as peaches pearled with dew,
Their golden windy hair afloat,
Love-music warbling in their throat
Young men and women come and go.

You linger, yet the time is short:
Flee for your life, gird up your strength
To flee; the shadows stretched at length
Show that day wanes, that night draws nigh;
Flee to the mountain, tarry not.
Is this a time for smile and sigh,
For songs among the secret trees
Where sudden blue birds nest and sport?
The time is short and yet you stay:
To-day, while it is called to-day,
Kneel, wrestle, knock, do violence, pray;
To-day is short, to-morrow nigh:
Why will you die? why will you die?

You sinned with me a pleasant sin:
Repent with me, for I repent.
Woe's me the lore I must unlearn!
Woe's me that easy way we went,
So rugged when I would return!
How long until my sleep begin,
How long shall stretch these nights and days?
Surely, clean Angels cry, she prays;
She laves her soul with tedious tears:
How long must stretch these years and years?

I turn from you my cheeks and eyes,
My hair which you shall see no more—
Alas for joy that went before,
For joy that dies, for love that dies!
Only my lips still turn to you,
My livid lips that cry, Repent!
O weary life, O weary Lent,
O weary time whose stars are few!

How should I rest in Paradise,
Or sit on steps of heaven alone?
If Saints and Angels spoke of love,
Should I not answer from my throne,
Have pity upon me, ye my friends,
For I have heard the sound thereof.
Should I not turn with yearning eyes,
Turn earthwards with a pitiful pang?
Oh save me from a pang in heaven!
By all the gifts we took and gave,
Repent, repent, and be forgiven.
This life is long, but yet it ends;
Repent and purge your soul and save:
No gladder song the morning stars
Upon their birthday morning sang
Than Angels sing when one repents.

I tell you what I dreamed last night.
A spirit with transfigured face
Fire-footed clomb an infinite space.
I heard his hundred pinions clang,
Heaven-bells rejoicing rang and rang,
Heaven-air was thrilled with subtle scents,
Worlds spun upon their rushing cars:
He mounted shrieking 'Give me light!'
Still light was poured on him, more light;
Angels, Archangels he outstripped,
Exultant in exceeding might,
And trod the skirts of Cherubim.
Still 'Give me light,' he shrieked; and dipped
His thirsty face, and drank a sea,
Athirst with thirst it could not slake.
I saw him, drunk with knowledge, take
From aching brows the aureole crown—
His locks writhe like a cloven snake—

He left his throne to grovel down
And lick the dust of Seraphs' feet:
For what is knowledge duly weighed?
Knowledge is strong, but love is sweet;
Yea all the progress he had made
Was but to learn that all is small
Save love, for love is all in all.

I tell you what I dreamed last night.
It was not dark, it was not light,
Cold dews had drenched my plenteous hair
Through clay; you came to seek me there,
And 'Do you dream of me?' you said.
My heart was dust that used to leap
To you; I answered half asleep:
'My pillow is damp, my sheets are red,
There's a leaden tester to my bed:
Find you a warmer playfellow,
A warmer pillow for your head,
A kinder love to love than mine.'
You wrung your hands: while I, like lead,
Crushed downwards through the sodden earth:
You smote your hands but not in mirth,
And reeled but were not drunk with wine.

For all night long I dreamed of you:
I woke and prayed against my will,
Then slept to dream of you again.
At length I rose and knelt and prayed.
I cannot write the words I said,
My words were slow, my tears were few;
But through the dark my silence spoke
Like thunder. When this morning broke,
My face was pinched, my hair was grey,
And frozen blood was on the sill
Where stifling in my struggle I lay.

If now you saw me you would say:
Where is the face I used to love?
And I would answer: Gone before;
It tarries veiled in Paradise.
When once the morning star shall rise,
When earth with shadow flees away
And we stand safe within the door,
Then you shall lift the veil thereof.
Look up, rise up: for far above
Our palms are grown, our place is set;
There we shall meet as once we met,
And love with old familiar love.

9 July 1858.

YET A LITTLE WHILE

These days are long before I die:
To sit alone upon a thorn
Is what the nightingale forlorn
Does night by night continually:
She swells her heart to ecstasy
Until it bursts and she can die.

These days are long that wane and wax:
Waxeth and wanes the ghostly moon,
A chill and pale in cordial June:
What is it that she wandering lacks?
She seems as one that aches and aches,
Most sick to wane, most sick to wax.

f all the sad sights in the world
The downfall of an Autumn leaf
Is grievous and suggesteth grief :
Vho thought when Spring was fresh unfurled
f this ? when Spring-twigs gleamed impearled
Vho thought of frost that nips the world ?

here are a hundred subtle stings
To prick us in our daily walk :
A young fruit cankered on its stalk,
strong bird snared for all his wings,
nest that sang but never sings :
ea sight and sound and silence stings.

here is a lack in solitude,
There is a load in throng of life :
One with another genders strife,
o be alone yet is not good :
know but of one neighbourhood
t peace and full—death's solitude.

leep soundly, dears, who lulled at last
Forget the bird and all her pains,
Forget the moon that waxes, wanes,
he leaf, the sting, the frostful blast :
orget the troublous years that, past
n strife or ache, did end at last.

Ve have clear call of daily bells,
A dimness where the anthems are,
A chancel vault of sky and star,
thunder if the organ swells :
las our daily life—what else ?—
not in tune with daily bells.

You have deep pause betwixt the chimes
Of earth and heaven, a patient pause
Yet glad with rest by certain laws :
You look and long : while oftentimes
Precursive flush of morning climbs,
And air vibrates with coming chimes.

6 *August* 1858.

FATHER AND LOVER

FATHER

IF underneath the water
You comb your golden hair
With a golden comb, my daughter,
Oh would that I were there !
If underneath the wave
You fill a slimy grave,
Would that I, who could not save,
Might share.

LOVER

If my love Hero queens it
In summer Fairyland,
What would I be
But the ring on her hand ?
Her cheek when she leans it
Would lean on me :—
Or sweet, bitter-sweet,
The flower that she wore
When we parted, to meet
On the hither shore
Any more ? never more.

Circa 1858.

BY THE SEA

WHY does the sea moan evermore ?
Shut out from heaven it makes its moan,
It frets against the boundary shore :

All earth's full rivers cannot fill
The sea, that drinking thirsteth still.

Sheer miracles of loveliness
Lie hid in its unlooked-on bed:
Anemones, salt, passionless,
Blow flower-like—just enough alive
To blow and multiply and thrive.

Shells quaint with curve or spot or spike,
Encrusted live things argus-eyed,
All fair alike yet all unlike,
Are born without a pang, and die
Without a pang, and so pass by.

11 *November* 1858.

WINTER RAIN

Every valley drinks,
Every dell and hollow;
Where the kind rain sinks and sinks,
Green of Spring will follow.

Yet a lapse of weeks—
Buds will burst their edges,
Strip their wool-coats, glue-coats, streaks,
In the woods and hedges;

Weave a bower of love
For birds to meet each other,
Weave a canopy above
Nest and egg and mother.

But for fattening rain
We should have no flowers,
Never a bud or leaf again
But for soaking showers;

Never a mated bird
In the rocking tree-tops,
Never indeed a flock or herd
To graze upon the lea-crops.

Lambs so woolly white,
Sheep the sun-bright leas on,
They could have no grass to bite
But for rain in season.

We should find no moss
In the shadiest places,
Find no waving meadow grass
Pied with broad-eyed daisies:

But miles of barren sand,
With never a son or daughter;
Not a lily on the land,
Or lily on the water.

31 *January* 1859.

L. E. L.

'Whose heart was breaking for a little love.'

Downstairs I laugh, I sport and jest with all;
But in my solitary room above
I turn my face in silence to the wall;
My heart is breaking for a little love.
Though winter frosts are done,
And birds pair every one,
And leaves peep out, for springtide is begun.

I feel no spring, while spring is well-nigh blown,
I find no nest, while nests are in the grove:
Woe's me for mine own heart that dwells alone,
My heart that breaketh for a little love.
While golden in the sun
Rivulets rise and run,
While lilies bud, for springtide is begun.

l love, are loved, save only I;
their hearts
Beat warm with love and joy,
beat full thereof:
ıey cannot guess, who play the
pleasant parts,
My heart is breaking for a little
love.
While bee-hives wake and
whirr,
And rabbit thins his fur,
living spring that sets the world
astir.

leck myself with silks and jewelry,
I plume myself like any mated
dove:
ıey praise my rustling show, and
never see
My heart is breaking for a little
love.
While sprouts green lavender
With rosemary and myrrh,
)r in quick spring the sap is all
astir.

rhaps some saints in glory guess
the truth,
Perhaps some angels read it as
they move,
ıd cry one to another full of ruth,
'Her heart is breaking for a little
love.'
Though other things have birth,
And leap and sing for mirth,
hen springtime wakes and clothes
and feeds the earth.

t saith a saint, 'Take patience
for thy scathe';
Yet saith an angel: 'Wait, and
thou shalt prove
ıe best is last, true life is born of
death,
O thou, heart-broken for a little
love.
Then love shall fill thy girth,
And love make fat thy dearth,
When new spring builds new heaven
and clean new earth.'

15 *February* 1859.

SPRING

FROST-LOCKED all the winter,
Seeds, and roots, and stones of
fruits,
What shall make their sap ascend
That they may put forth shoots?
Tips of tender green,
Leaf, or blade, or sheath;
Telling of the hidden life
That breaks forth underneath,
Life nursed in its grave by Death.

Blows the thaw-wind pleasantly,
Drips the soaking rain,
By fits looks down the waking sun:
Young grass springs on the plain;
Young leaves clothe early hedgerow
trees;
Seeds, and roots, and stones of
fruits,
Swoln with sap put forth their
shoots;
Curled-headed ferns sprout in the
lane;
Birds sing and pair again.

There is no time like Spring,
When life's alive in everything,
Before new nestlings sing,
Before cleft swallows speed their
journey back
Along the trackless track—
God guides their wing,
He spreads their table that they
nothing lack,—

Before the daisy grows a common flower,
Before the sun has power
To scorch the world up in his noontide hour.

There is no time like Spring,
Like Spring that passes by;
There is no life like Spring-life born to die,—
Piercing the sod,
Clothing the uncouth clod,
Hatched in the nest,
Fledged on the windy bough,
Strong on the wing:
There is no time like Spring that passes by,
Now newly born, and now
Hastening to die.

17 August 1859.

WHAT GOOD SHALL MY LIFE DO ME?

NO hope in life: yet is there hope
In death, the threshold of man's scope.
Man yearneth (as the heliotrope

For ever seeks the sun) through light,
Through dark, for Love: all, read aright,
Is Love, for Love is infinite.

Shall not this infinite Love suffice
To feed thy dearth? Lift heart and eyes
Up to the hills, grow glad and wise.

The hills are glad because the sun
Kisses their round tops every one
Where silver fountains laugh and run:

Smooth pebbles shine beneath: beside,
The grass, mere green, grows myriad-eyed
With pomp of blossoms veined or pied.

So every nest is glad whereon
The sun in tender strength has shone:
So every fruit he glows upon:

So every valley depth, whose herds
At pasture praise him without words:
So the winged ecstasies of birds.

If there be any such thing, what
Is there by sunlight betters not?
Nothing except dead things that rot.

Thou then who art not dead, and fit,
Like blasted tree beside the pit,
But for the axe that levels it,

Living show life of Love, whereof
The force wields earth and heaven above:
Who knows not Love begetteth Love?

Love in the gracious rain distils:
Love moves the subtle fountain-rills
To fertilize uplifted hills,

And seedful valleys fertilize:
Love stills the hungry lion's cries,
And the young raven satisfies:

Love hangs this earth in space Love rolls
Fair worlds rejoicing on their poles
And girds them round with aureoles

Love lights the sun: Love through the dark
Lights the moon's evanescent arc:
Same Love lights up the glow-worm's spark:

Love rears the great: Love tends the small:
Breaks off the yoke, breaks down the wall:
Accepteth all, fulfilleth all.

O ye who taste that Love is sweet,
Set waymarks for the doubtful feet
That stumble on in search of it.

Sing hymns of Love, that those who hear
Far off in pain may lend an ear,
Rise up and wonder and draw near.

Lead lives of Love, that others who
Behold your lives may kindle too
With Love and cast their lots with you.

27 *August* 1859.

COUSIN KATE

I WAS a cottage-maiden
Hardened by sun and air,
Contented with my cottage-mates,
Not mindful I was fair.
Why did a great lord find me out
And praise my flaxen hair?
Why did a great lord find me out
To fill my heart with care?

He lured me to his palace-home—
Woe's me for joy thereof—
To lead a shameless shameful life,
His plaything and his love.

He wore me like a golden knot,
He changed me like a glove:
So now I moan an unclean thing
Who might have been a dove.

O Lady Kate, my Cousin Kate,
You grew more fair than I:
He saw you at your father's gate,
Chose you and cast me by.
He watched your steps along the lane,
Your sport among the rye:
He lifted you from mean estate
To sit with him on high.

Because you were so good and pure
He bound you with his ring:
The neighbours call you good and pure,
Call me an outcast thing.
Even so I sit and howl in dust,
You sit in gold and sing:
Now which of us has tenderer heart?
You had the stronger wing.

O Cousin Kate, my love was true,
Your love was writ in sand:
If he had fooled not me but you,
If you stood where I stand,
He had not won me with his love
Nor bought me with his land:
I would have spit into his face
And not have taken his hand.

Yet I've a gift you have not got
And seem not like to get:
For all your clothes and wedding-ring
I've little doubt you fret.
My fair-haired son, my shame, my pride,
Cling closer, closer yet:
Your sire would give broad lands for one
To wear his coronet.

18 *November* 1859.

SISTER MAUDE

WHO told my mother of my shame,
Who told my father of my dear?
Oh who but Maude, my sister Maude,
Who lurked to spy and peer.

Cold he lies, as cold as stone,
With his clotted curls about his face:
The comeliest corpse in all the world
And worthy of a queen's embrace.

You might have spared his soul, sister,
Have spared my soul, your own soul too:
Though I had not been born at all,
He'd never have looked at you.

My father may sleep in Paradise,
My mother at Heaven-gate:
But sister Maude shall get no sleep
Either early or late.

My father may wear a golden gown,
My mother a crown may win;
If my dear and I knocked at Heaven-gate
Perhaps they'd let us in:
But sister Maude, O sister Maude,
Bide *you* with death and sin.

Circa 1860.

NOBLE SISTERS

'NOW did you mark a falcon,
Sister dear, sister dear,
Flying toward my window
In the morning cool and clear?
With jingling bells about her neck,
But what beneath her wing?
It may have been a ribbon,
Or it may have been a ring.'—

'I marked a falcon swooping
At the break of day:
And for your love, my sister dove,
I 'frayed the thief away.'—

'Or did you spy a ruddy hound,
Sister fair and tall,
Went snuffing round my garden bound,
Or crouched by my bower wall?
With a silken leash about his neck;
But in his mouth may be
A chain of gold and silver links,
Or a letter writ to me.'—

'I heard a hound, highborn sister,
Stood baying at the moon:
I rose and drove him from your wall
Lest you should wake too soon.'—

'Or did you meet a pretty page
Sat swinging on the gate?
Sat whistling whistling like a bird,
Or may be slept too late:
With eaglets broidered on his cap,
And eaglets on his glove.
If you had turned his pockets out,
You had found some pledge of love.'—

'I met him at this daybreak,
Scarce the east was red:
Lest the creaking gate should anger you
I packed him home to bed.'—

'Oh patience, sister! Did you see
A young man tall and strong,
Swift-footed to uphold the right
And to uproot the wrong,

ome home across the desolate sea
To woo me for his wife?
nd in his heart my heart is locked,
And in his life my life.'—
'I met a nameless man, sister,
Who loitered round our door:
I said: Her husband loves her much
And yet she loves him more.'—

Fie, sister, fie, a wicked lie,
A lie, a wicked lie!
have none other love but him,
Nor will have till I die.
nd you have turned him from our door,
And stabbed him with a lie:
will go seek him thro' the world
In sorrow till I die.'—
'Go seek in sorrow, sister,
And find in sorrow too:
If thus you shame our father's name
My curse go forth with you.'

Towards January 1860.

'NO, THANK YOU, JOHN'

NEVER said I loved you, John;
Why will you tease me day by day,
nd wax a weariness to think upon
With always 'do' and 'pray'?

ou know I never loved you, John;
No fault of mine made me your toast:
Vhy will you haunt me with a face as wan
As shows an hour-old ghost?

I dare say Meg or Moll would take
Pity upon you, if you'd ask:
And pray don't remain single for my sake
Who can't perform that task.

I have no heart?—Perhaps I have not;
But then you're mad to take offence
That I don't give you what I have not got:
Use your own common sense.

Let bygones be bygones:
Don't call me false, who owed not to be true:
I'd rather answer 'No' to fifty Johns
Than answer 'Yes' to you.

Let's mar our pleasant days no more,
Song-birds of passage, days of youth:
Catch at to-day, forget the days before;
I'll wink at your untruth.

Let us strike hands as hearty friends;
No more, no less; and friendship's good:
Only don't keep in view ulterior ends,
And points not understood

In open treaty. Rise above
Quibbles and shuffling off and on.
Here's friendship for you if you like; but love,—
No, thank you, John.

27 *March* 1860.

MIRAGE

THE hope I dreamed of was a dream,
Was but a dream; and now I wake,
Exceeding comfortless, and worn, and old,
For a dream's sake.

I hang my harp upon a tree,
A weeping willow in a lake;
I hang my silenced harp there, wrung and snapt
For a dream's sake.

Lie still, lie still, my breaking heart;
My silent heart, lie still and break:
Life, and the world, and mine own self, are changed
For a dream's sake.

12 *June* 1860.

THE LAMBS OF GRASMERE, 1860

THE upland flocks grew starved and thinned:
Their shepherds scarce could feed the lambs
Whose milkless mothers butted them,
Or who were orphaned of their dams.
The lambs athirst for mother's milk
Filled all the place with piteous sounds:
Their mothers' bones made white for miles
The pastureless wet pasture grounds.

Day after day, night after night,
From lamb to lamb the shepherds went,
With teapots for the bleating mouths,
Instead of nature's nourishment.
The little shivering gaping things
Soon knew the step that brought them aid,
And fondled the protecting hand,
And rubbed it with a woolly head.

Then, as the days waxed on to weeks,
It was a pretty sight to see
These lambs with frisky heads and tails
Skipping and leaping on the lea,
Bleating in tender trustful tones,
Resting on rocky crag or mound,
And following the beloved feet
That once had sought for them and found.

These very shepherds of their flocks,
These loving lambs so meek to please,
Are worthy of recording words
And honour in their due degrees:
So I might live a hundred years,
And roam from strand to foreign strand,
Yet not forget this flooded spring
And scarce-saved lambs of Westmoreland.

24 *July* 1860.

PROMISES LIKE PIE-CRUST

PROMISE me no promises,
So will I not promise you:
Keep we both our liberties,
Never false and never true:
Let us hold the die uncast,
Free to come as free to go:

For I cannot know your past,
And of mine what can you know?

You, so warm, may once have been
Warmer towards another one:
I, so cold, may once have seen
Sunlight, once have felt the sun:
Who shall show us if it was
Thus indeed in time of old?
Fades the image from the glass,
And the fortune is not told.

If you promised, you might grieve
For lost liberty again:
If I promised, I believe
I should fret to break the chain.
Let us be the friends we were,
Nothing more but nothing less:
Many thrive on frugal fare
Who would perish of excess.

20 *April* 1861.

WIFE TO HUSBAND

PARDON the faults in me,
For the love of years ago:
Good-bye.
I must drift across the sea,
I must sink into the snow,
I must die.

You can bask in this sun,
You can drink wine, and eat:
Good-bye.
I must gird myself and run,
Though with unready feet:
I must die.

Blank sea to sail upon,
Cold bed to sleep in:
Good-bye.
While you clasp, I must be gone
For all your weeping:
I must die.

A kiss for one friend,
And a word for two,—
Good-bye:—
A lock that you must send,
A kindness you must do:
I must die.

Not a word for you,
Not a lock or kiss,
Good-bye.
We, one, must part in two;
Verily death is this:
I must die.

8 *June* 1861.

BETTER SO

FAST asleep, mine own familiar friend,
Fast asleep at last:
Though the pain was strong,
Though the struggle long,
It is past:
All thy pangs are at an end.

Whilst I weep, whilst death-bells toll,
Thou art fast asleep,
With idle hands upon thy breast
And heart at rest:
Whilst I weep
Angels sing around thy singing soul.

I would not speak the word if I could raise
My dead to life:
I would not speak
If I could flush thy cheek
And rouse thy pulses' strife
And send thy feet on the once-trodden ways.

13 *December* 1861.

OUR WIDOWED QUEEN

THE Husband of the widow care for her,
The Father of the fatherless:
The faithful Friend, the abiding Comforter,
Watch over her to bless.

Full twenty years of blameless married faith,
Of love and honour questioned not,
Joys, griefs imparted: for the first time Death
Sunders the common lot.

Christ help the desolate Queen upon her throne,
Strengthen her hands, confirm her heart:
For she henceforth must bear a load alone
Borne until now in part.

Christ help the desolate Woman in her home,
Broken of heart, indeed bereft:
Shrinking from solitary days to come,
Beggared though much is left.

Rise up, O Sons and Daughters of the Dead,
Weep with your Mother where she weeps:
Yet not as sorrowing without hope be shed
Your tears: he only sleeps.

Rise up, O Sons and Daughters of the realm,
In pale reflected sorrow move:
Revere the widowed hand that holds the helm,
Love her with double love.

In royal patience of her soul possest
May she fulfil her length of days:
Then may her children rise and call her blest,
Then may her Husband praise.

16 *December* 1861.

IN PROGRESS

TEN years ago it seemed impossible
That she should ever grow so calm as this,
With self-remembrance in her warmest kiss
And dim dried eyes like an exhausted well.
Slow-speaking when she has some fact to tell,
Silent with long-unbroken silences,
Centred in self yet not unpleased to please,
Gravely monotonous like a passing bell.
Mindful of drudging daily common things,
Patient at pastime, patient at her work,
Wearied perhaps but strenuous certainly.
Sometimes I fancy we may one day see
Her head shoot forth seven stars from where they lurk
And her eyes lightnings and her shoulders wings.

31 *March* 1862.

ON THE WING

ONCE in a dream (for once I dreamed of you)
We stood together in an open field;

Above our heads two swift-winged
pigeons wheeled,
Sporting at ease and courting full
in view :—
When loftier still a broadening dark-
ness flew,
Down-swooping, and a ravenous
hawk revealed ;
Too weak to fight, too fond to fly,
they yield ;
So farewell life and love and
pleasures new.
Then as their plumes fell fluttering
to the ground,
Their snow-white plumage flecked
with crimson drops,
I wept, and thought I turned
towards you to weep :
But you were gone ; while rust-
ling hedgerow tops
Bent in a wind which bore to me a
sound
Of far-off piteous bleat of lambs
and sheep.

17 December 1862.

SONG

Two doves upon the selfsame
branch,
Two lilies on a single stem,
Two butterflies upon one flower :—
Oh happy they who look on them !

Who look upon them hand in
hand
Flushed in the rosy summer light ;
Who look upon them hand in hand,
And never give a thought to
night.

Before 1863.

THE QUEEN OF HEARTS

How comes it, Flora, that, when-
ever we
Play cards together, you invariably,
However the pack parts,
Still hold the Queen of Hearts?

I've scanned you with a scrutinizing
gaze,
Resolved to fathom these your secret
ways :
But, sift them as I will,
Your ways are secret still.

I cut and shuffle ; shuffle, cut, again ;
But all my cutting, shuffling, proves
in vain :
Vain hope, vain forethought too;
That Queen still falls to you.

I dropped her once, prepense ; but,
ere the deal
Was dealt, your instinct seemed her
loss to feel :
'There should be one card
more,'
You said, and searched the
floor.

I cheated once ; I made a private
notch
In Heart-Queen's back, and kept a
lynx-eyed watch ;
Yet such another back
Deceived me in the pack :

The Queen of Clubs assumed by
arts unknown
An imitative dint that seemed my
own ;
This notch, not of my doing,
Misled me to my ruin.

It baffles me to puzzle out the clue,
Which must be skill, or craft, or
luck in you :
Unless, indeed, it be
Natural affinity.

3 *January* 1863.

SEASONS

Oh the cheerful Budding-time !
When thorn-hedges turn to green,
When new leaves of elm and lime
Cleave and shed their winter
screen ;
Tender lambs are born and baa,
North wind finds no snow to bring,
Vigorous Nature laughs 'Ha ha !'
In the miracle of Spring.

Oh the gorgeous Blossom-days !
When broad flag-flowers drink
and blow ;
In and out in Summer-blaze
Dragon-flies flash to and fro ;
Ashen branches hang out keys ;
Oaks put forth the rosy shoot,
Wandering herds wax sleek at ease,
Lovely blossoms end in fruit.

Oh the shouting Harvest-weeks !
Mother Earth grown fat with
sheaves ;
Thrifty gleaner finds who seeks ;
Russet-golden pomp of leaves
Crowns the woods, to fall at length :
Bracing winds are felt to stir,
Ocean gathers up her strength,
Beasts renew their dwindled fur.

Oh the starving Winter lapse !
Ice-bound, hunger-pinched, and
dim ;
Dormant roots recall their saps,
Empty nests show black and
grim.
Short-lived sunshine gives no heat,
Undue buds are nipped by frost,
Snow sets forth a winding-sheet,
And all hope of life seems lost.

20 *January* 1863.

JUNE

Come, cuckoo, come :
Come again, swift swallow :
Come and welcome ! when you come
Summer's sure to follow :
June the month of months
Flowers and fruitage brings too,
When green trees spread shadiest
boughs,
When each wild bird sings too.

May is scant and crude,
Generous June is riper :
Birds fall silent in July,
June has its woodland piper :
Rocks upon the maple-tops
Homely-hearted linnet,
Full in hearing of his nest
And the dear ones in it.

If the year would stand
Still at June for ever,
With no further growth on land
Nor further flow of river,
If all nights were shortest nights
And longest days were all the seven,
This might be a merrier world
To my mind to live in.

5 *February* 1863.

A RING POSY

Jess and Jill are pretty girls,
Plump and well to do,

In a cloud of windy curls :
Yet I know who
Loves me more than curls or pearls.

I'm not pretty, not a bit—
Thin and sallow-pale ;
When I trudge along the street
I don't need a veil :
Yet I have one fancy hit.

ess and Jill can trill and sing
With a flute-like voice,
Dance as light as bird on wing,
Laugh for careless joys :
et it's I who wear the ring.

ess and Jill will mate some day,
Surely, surely :
ipen on to June through May,
hile the sun shines make their
hay—
Slacken steps demurely :
et even there I lead the way.
20 *February* 1863.

HELEN GREY

CAUSE one loves you, Helen Grey,
Is that a reason you should pout,
And like a March wind veer about,
d frown, and say your shrewish
say ?
n't strain the cord until it snaps,
Don't split the sound heart with
your wedge,
Don't cut your fingers with the
edge
our keen wit ; you may perhaps.

ause you're handsome, Helen
Grey,
s that a reason to be proud ?
our eyes are bold, your laugh is
loud,
steps go mincing on their way ;

But so you miss that modest charm
Which is the surest charm of all ;
Take heed, you yet may trip and
fall,
And no man care to stretch his arm.

Stoop from your cold height, Helen
Grey,
Come down, and take a lowlier
place,
Come down, to fill it now with
grace ;
Come down you must perforce some
day :
For years cannot be kept at bay,
And fading years will make you
old ;
Then in their turn will men seem
cold,
When you yourself are nipped and
grey.
23 *February* 1863.

A YEAR'S WINDFALLS

ON the wind of January
Down flits the snow,
Travelling from the frozen North
As cold as it can blow.
Poor robin redbreast,
Look where he comes ;
Let him in to feel your fire,
And toss him of your crumbs.

On the wind in February
Snowflakes float still,
Half inclined to turn to rain,
Nipping, dripping, chill.
Then the thaws swell the streams,
And swollen rivers swell the
sea :
If the winter ever ends,
How pleasant it will be !

In the wind of windy March
The catkins drop down,
Curly, caterpillar-like,
Curious green and brown.
With concourse of nest-building birds
And leaf-buds by the way,
We begin to think of flowers
And life and nuts some day.

With the gusts of April
Rich fruit-tree blossoms fall,
On the hedged-in orchard-green,
From the southern wall.
Apple-trees and pear-trees
Shed petals white or pink,
Plum-trees and peach-trees;
While sharp showers sink and sink.

Little brings the May breeze
Beside pure scent of flowers,
While all things wax and nothing wanes
In lengthening daylight hours.
Across the hyacinth beds
The wind lags warm and sweet,
Across the hawthorn tops,
Across the blades of wheat.

In the wind of sunny June
Thrives the red rose crop,
Every day fresh blossoms blow
While the first leaves drop;
White rose and yellow rose
And moss rose choice to find,
And the cottage cabbage-rose
Not one whit behind.

On the blast of scorched July
Drives the pelting hail
From thunderous lightning-clouds that blot
Blue heaven grown lurid-pale.
Weedy waves are tossed ashore;
Sea-things strange to sight
Gasp upon the barren shore
And fade away in light.

In the parching August wind
Corn-fields bow the head,
Sheltered in round valley depths,
On low hills outspread.
Early leaves drop loitering down
Weightless on the breeze,
First fruits of the year's decay
From the withering trees.

In brisk wind of September
The heavy-headed fruits
Shake upon their bending boughs
And drop from the shoots;
Some glow golden in the sun,
Some show green and streaked,
Some set forth a purple bloom,
Some blush rosy-cheeked.

In strong blast of October
At the equinox,
Stirred up in his hollow bed
Broad ocean rocks;
Plunge the ships on his bosom,
Leaps and plunges the foam,—
It's oh for mothers' sons at sea,
That they were safe at home!

In slack wind of November
The fog forms and shifts;
All the world comes out again
When the fog lifts.
Loosened from their sapless twigs
Leaves drop with every gust;
Drifting, rustling, out of sight
In the damp or dust.

Last of all, December,
The year's sands nearly run,
Speeds on the shortest day,
Curtails the sun;

With its bleak raw wind
Lays the last leaves low,
Brings back the nightly frosts,
Brings back the snow.

26 *February* 1863.

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

'Croak, croak, croak,'
Thus the Raven spoke,
Perched on his crooked tree,
As hoarse as hoarse could be.
Shun him and fear him,
Lest the Bridegroom hear him;
Scout him and rout him
With his ominous eye about him.

Yet 'Croak, croak, croak,'
Still tolled from the oak,
From that fatal black bird,
Whether heard or unheard:
'O ship upon the high seas,
Freighted with lives and spices,
Sink, O ship,' croaked the Raven:
'Let the Bride mount to heaven.'

In a far foreign land
Upon the wave-edged sand,
Some friends gaze wistfully
Across the glittering sea.
'If we could clasp our sister,'
Three say, 'now we have missed her!'
'If we could kiss our daughter!'
Two sigh across the water.

Oh the ship sails fast
With silken flags at the mast,
And the home-wind blows soft.
But a Raven sits aloft,
Chuckling and choking,
Croaking, croaking, croaking.
Let the beacon-fire blaze higher;
Bridegroom, watch; the Bride draws nigher.

On a sloped sandy beach,
Which the spring-tide billows reach,
Stand a watchful throng
Who have hoped and waited long:
'Fie on this ship that tarries
With the priceless freight it carries!
The time seems long and longer:
O languid wind, wax stronger;'—

Whilst the Raven perched at ease
Still croaks and does not cease,
One monotonous note
Tolled from his iron throat:
'No father, no mother,
But I have a sable brother:
He sees where ocean flows to,
And he knows what he knows too.'

A day and a night
They kept watch worn and white;
A night and a day
For the swift ship on its way:
For the Bride and her maidens—
Clear chimes the bridal cadence—
For the tall ship that never
Hove in sight for ever.

On either shore, some
Stand in grief loud or dumb
As the dreadful dread
Grows certain though unsaid.
For laughter there is weeping,
And waking instead of sleeping,
And a desperate sorrow
Morrow after morrow.

Oh who knows the truth?
How she perished in her youth,
And like a queen went down
Pale in her royal crown:
How she went up to glory
From the sea-foam chill and hoary,
From the sea-depth black and riven
To the calm that is in Heaven.

They went down, all the crew,
The silks and spices too,
The great ones and the small,
One and all, one and all.
Was it through stress of weather,
Quicksands, rocks, or all together?
Only the Raven knows this,
And he will not disclose this.—

After a day and a year
The bridal bell chimes clear;
After a year and a day
The Bridegroom is brave and gay.
Love is sound, faith is rotten:
The old Bride is forgotten:—
Two ominous Ravens only
Remember, black and lonely.

4 *March* 1863.

A DUMB FRIEND

I PLANTED a young tree when I was young:
But now the tree is grown and I am old:
There wintry robin shelters from the cold
And tunes his silver tongue.

A green and living tree I planted it,
A glossy-foliaged tree of evergreen:
All through the noontide heat it spread a screen
Whereunder I might sit.

But now I only watch it where it towers:
I, sitting at my window, watch it tost
By rattling gale or silvered by the frost;
Or, when sweet summer flowers,
Wagging its round green head with stately grace
In tender winds that kiss it and go by.
It shows a green full age: and what show I?
A faded wrinkled face.

So often have I watched it, till mine eyes
Have filled with tears and I have ceased to see,
That now it seems a very friend to me,
In all my secrets wise.

A faithful pleasant friend, who year by year
Grew with my growth and strengthened with my strength,
But whose green lifetime shows a longer length:
When I shall not sit here

It still will bud in spring, and shed rare leaves
In autumn, and in summer-heat give shade,
And warmth in winter: when my bed is made
In shade the cypress weaves.

24 *March* 1863.

LIFE AND DEATH

LIFE is not sweet. One day it will be sweet
To shut our eyes and die;
Nor feel the wild flowers blow, nor birds dart by
With flitting butterfly,
Nor grass grow long above our heads and feet,

Nor hear the happy lark that soars
sky-high,
Nor sigh that spring is fleet and
summer fleet,
Nor mark the waxing wheat,
Nor know who sits in our accustomed
seat.

Life is not good. One day it will be
good
To die, then live again;
To sleep meanwhile; so, not to feel
the wane
Of shrunk leaves dropping in
the wood,
Nor hear the foamy lashing of the
main,
Nor mark the blackened bean-fields,
nor, where stood
Rich ranks of golden grain,
Only dead refuse stubble clothe the
plain:
Asleep from risk, asleep from
pain.

24 *April* 1863.

TWILIGHT NIGHT

I

We met hand to hand,
We clasped hands close and fast,
As close as oak and ivy stand:
But it is past;
Come day, come night, day comes
at last.

We loosed hand from hand,
We parted face from face:
Each went his way to his own land
At his own pace,
Each went to fill his separate
place.

If we should meet one day,
If both should not forget,
We shall clasp hands the accustomed
way,
As when we met,
So long ago, as I remember yet.

26 *August* 1864.

II

Where my heart is (wherever that
may be)
Might I but follow!
If you fly thither over heath and lea,
O honey-seeking bee,
O careless swallow,
Bid some for whom I watch keep
watch for me.

Alas that we must dwell, my heart
and I,
So far asunder!
Hours wax to days, and days and
days creep by;
I watch with wistful eye,
I wait and wonder:
When will that day draw nigh—that
hour draw nigh?

Not yesterday, and not I think to-day;
Perhaps to-morrow.
Day after day 'To-morrow' thus I
say:
I watched so yesterday
In hope and sorrow,
Again to-day I watch the accustomed
way.

25 *June* 1863.

THE POOR GHOST

'Oh whence do you come, my dear
friend, to me,
With your golden hair all fallen
below your knee,

And your face as white as snowdrops
on the lea,
And your voice as hollow as the
hollow sea?'

'From the other world I come back
to you:
My locks are uncurled with dripping
drenching dew.
You know the old, whilst I know the
new:
But to-morrow you shall know this
too.'

'Oh not to-morrow into the dark, I
pray;
Oh not to-morrow, too soon to go
away:
Here I feel warm and well-content
and gay:
Give me another year, another day.'

'Am I so changed in a day and a
night
That mine own only love shrinks
from me with fright,
Is fain to turn away to left or right
And cover up his eyes from the
sight?'

'Indeed I loved you, my chosen
friend,
I loved you for life, but life has an
end;
Through sickness I was ready to
tend:
But death mars all, which we cannot
mend.

'Indeed I loved you; I love you yet,
If you will stay where your bed is
set,
Where I have planted a violet,
Which the wind waves, which the
dew makes wet.'

'Life is gone, then love too is gone,
It was a reed that I leant upon:
Never doubt I will leave you alone
And not wake you rattling bone
with bone.

'I go home alone to my bed,
Dug deep at the foot and deep at
the head,
Roofed in with a load of lead,
Warm enough for the forgotten dead.

'But why did your tears soak through
the clay,
And why did your sobs wake me
where I lay?
I was away, far enough away:
Let me sleep now till the Judgment
Day.'

25 *July* 1863.

MARGERY

WHAT shall we do with Margery?
She lies and cries upon her bed,
All lily-pale from foot to head;
Her heart is sore as sore can be:
Poor guileless shamefaced Margery.

A foolish girl, to love a man
And let him know she loved him
so!
She should have tried a different
plan:
Have loved, but not have let him
know:
Then he perhaps had loved her so.

What can we do with Margery
Who has no relish for her food?
We'd take her with us to the sea—
Across the sea—but where's the
good?
She'd fret alike on land and sea.

s, what the neighbours say is true :
Girls should not make themselves
so cheap.
t now it's done what can we do ?
I hear her moaning in her sleep,
Moaning and sobbing in her sleep.

think—and I'm of flesh and
blood—
Were I that man for whom she
cares,
I would not cost her tears and
prayers
leave her just alone like mud,
Fretting her simple heart with
cares.

year ago she was a child,
Now she's a woman in her grief :
The year's now at the falling leaf ;
budding of the leaves she smiled :
or foolish harmless foolish child.

was her own fault ? so it was.
If every own fault found us out,
Dogged us and snared us round-
about,
nat comfort should we take because
Not half our due we thus wrung
out ?

any rate the question stands :
What now to do with Margery,
eak poor creature on our hands ?
omething we must do : I'll not
see
er blossom fade, sweet Margery.

haps a change may after all
rove best for her : to leave
behind
hese home-sights seen time out
of mind ;
et beyond the narrow wall
me, and learn home is not all.

Perhaps this way she may forget,
Not all at once, but in a while :
May come to wonder how she set
Her heart on this slight thing,
and smile
At her own folly, in a while.

Yet this I say and I maintain :
Were I the man she's fretting for,
I should my very self abhor
If I could leave her to her pain,
Uncomforted to tears and pain.

1 *October* 1863.

LAST NIGHT

WHERE were you last night ? I
watched at the gate ;
I went down early, I stayed down
late.
Were you snug at home, I
should like to know,
Or were you in the coppice wheed-
ling Kate ?

She's a fine girl, with a fine clear
skin ;
Easy to woo, perhaps not hard to
win.
Speak up like a man and tell
me the truth :
I'm not one to grow downhearted
and thin.

If you love her best, speak up
like a man ;
It's not I will stand in the light
of your plan :
Some girls might cry and scold
you a bit,
And say they couldn't bear it ; but
I can.

Love was pleasant enough, and
the days went fast;
Pleasant while it lasted, but it needn't
last;
Awhile on the wax, and awhile
on the wane,
Now dropped away into the past.

Was it pleasant to you? To me
it was:
Now clean gone as an image from
glass,
As a goodly rainbow that fades
away,
As dew that steams upward from
the grass;

As the first spring day or the last
summer day,
As the sunset flush that leaves
heaven grey,
As a flame burnt out for lack of
oil,
Which no pains relight or ever
may.

Good luck to Kate and good luck
to you:
I guess she'll be kind when you
come to woo.
I wish her a pretty face that
will last,
I wish her a husband steady and
true.

Hate you? not I, my very good
friend;
All things begin and all have an
end.
But let broken be broken: I
put no faith
In quacks who set up to patch
and mend.

Just my love and one word t
Kate—
Not to let time slip if she mean
to mate;
For even such a thing has bee
known
As to miss the chance while w
weigh and wait.

November 1863.

SOMEWHERE OR OTHER

SOMEWHERE or other there mus
surely be
The face not seen, the voice no
heard,
The heart that not yet—never ye
—ah me!
Made answer to my word.

Somewhere or other, may be nea
or far;
Past land and sea, clean out o
sight;
Beyond the wandering moon, beyon
the star
That tracks her night by nigh

Somewhere or other, may be far o
near;
With just a wall, a hedge, be
tween;
With just the last leaves of th
dying year
Fallen on a turf grown green.

Towards November 1863.

A CHILL

WHAT can lambkins do
All the keen night through?
Nestle by their woolly mother
The careful ewe.

What can nestlings do
In the nightly dew?
Sleep beneath their mother's wing
Till day breaks anew.

If in field or tree
There might only be
Such a warm soft sleeping-place
Found for me!

Towards December 1863.

SUMMER

WINTER is cold-hearted,
Spring is yea and nay,
Autumn is a weathercock
Blown every way.
Summer days for me
When every leaf is on its tree;

When Robin's not a beggar,
And Jenny Wren's a bride,
And larks hang singing, singing, singing,
Over the wheat-fields wide,
And anchored lilies ride,
And the pendulum spider
Swings from side to side;

And blue-black beetles transact business,
And gnats fly in a host,
And furry caterpillars hasten
That no time be lost,
And moths grow fat and thrive,
And ladybirds arrive.

Before green apples blush,
Before green nuts embrown,
Why one day in the country
Is worth a month in town;
Is worth a day and a year
Of the dusty, musty, lag-last fashion
That days drone elsewhere.

15 *January* 1864.

BEAUTY IS VAIN

WHILE roses are so red,
While lilies are so white,
Shall a woman exalt her face
Because it gives delight?
She's not so sweet as a rose,
A lily's straighter than she,
And if she were as red or white
She'd be but one of three.

Whether she flush in love's summer
Or in its winter grow pale,
Whether she flaunt her beauty
Or hide it away in a veil,
Be she red or white
And stand she erect or bowed,
Time will win the race he runs with her,
And hide her away in a shroud.

20 *January* 1864.

WHAT WOULD I GIVE!

WHAT would I give for a heart of flesh to warm me through,
Instead of this heart of stone ice-cold whatever I do!
Hard and cold and small, of all hearts the worst of all.

What would I give for words, if only words would come!
But now in its misery my spirit has fallen dumb.
O merry friends, go your way, I have never a word to say.

What would I give for tears! not smiles but scalding tears,
To wash the black mark clean, and to thaw the frost of years,
To wash the stain ingrain, and to make me clean again.

28 *January* 1864.

THE GHOST'S PETITION

'THERE'S a footstep coming; look out and see.'—
'The leaves are falling, the wind is calling;
No one cometh across the lea.'—

'There's a footstep coming; O sister, look.'—
'The ripple flashes, the white foam dashes;
No one cometh across the brook.'—

'But he promised that he would come:
To-night, to-morrow, in joy or sorrow,
He must keep his word, and must come home.

'For he promised that he would come:
His word was given; from earth or heaven,
He must keep his word, and must come home.

'Go to sleep, my sweet sister Jane;
You can slumber, who need not number
Hour after hour, in doubt and pain.

'I shall sit here awhile, and watch;
Listening, hoping, for one hand groping
In deep shadow to find the latch.'

After the dark and before the light,
One lay sleeping; and one sat weeping,
Who had watched and wept the weary night.

After the night and before the day,
One lay sleeping; and one sat weeping—
Watching, weeping for one away.

There came a footstep climbing the stair;
Some one standing out on the landing
Shook the door like a puff of air—

Shook the door and in he passed.
Did he enter? In the room centre
Stood her husband: the door shut fast.

'O Robin, but you are cold—
Chilled with the night-dew: so lily-white you
Look like a stray lamb from our fold.

'O Robin, but you are late:
Come and sit near me—sit here and cheer me.'—
(Blue the flame burnt in the grate.)

'Lay not down your head on my breast:
I cannot hold you, kind wife, nor fold you
In the shelter that you love best.

'Feel not after my clasping hand:
I am but a shadow, come from the meadow
Where many lie, but no tree can stand.

'We are trees which have shed their leaves:
Our heads lie low there, but no tears flow there;
Only I grieve for my wife who grieves.

'I could rest if you would not moan
  Hour after hour; I have no power
To shut my ears where I lie alone.

'I could rest if you would not cry;
  But there's no sleeping while you sit weeping—
Watching, weeping so bitterly.'—

'Woe's me! woe's me! for this I have heard.
  Oh night of sorrow!—oh black to-morrow!
Is it thus that you keep your word?

'O you who used so to shelter me
  Warm from the least wind—why, now the east wind
Is warmer than you, whom I quake to see.

'O my husband of flesh and blood,
  For whom my mother I left, and brother,
And all I had, accounting it good,

'What do you do there, underground,
  In the dark hollow? I'm fain to follow.
What do you do there?—what have you found?'—

'What I do there I must not tell:
  But I have plenty; kind wife, content ye:
It is well with us—it is well.

'Tender hand hath made our nest;
  Our fear is ended, our hope is blended
With present pleasure, and we have rest.'

'Oh but Robin, I'm fain to come,
  If your present days are so pleasant,
For my days are so wearisome.

'Yet I'll dry my tears for your sake:
  Why should I tease you, who cannot please you
Any more with the pains I take?'

7 April 1864.

HOPING AGAINST HOPE

If he would come to-day, to-day, to-day,
  Oh what a day to-day would be!
But now he's away, miles and miles away
  From me across the sea.

O little bird, flying, flying, flying
  To your nest in the warm west,
Tell him as you pass that I am dying,
  As you pass home to your nest.

I have a sister, I have a brother,
  A faithful hound, a tame white dove;
But I had another, once I had another,
  And I miss him, my love, my love!

In this weary world it is so cold, so cold,
  While I sit here all alone;
I would not like to wait and to grow old,
  But just to be dead and gone.

Make me fair when I lie dead on my bed,
  Fair where I am lying:
Perhaps he may come and look upon me dead—
  He for whom I am dying.

Dig my grave for two, with a stone to show it,
  And on the stone write my name:

If he never comes, I shall never
know it,
But sleep on all the same.
12 *April* 1864.

SUNSHINE

'THERE'S little sunshine in my heart,
Slack to spring, lead to sink:
There's little sunshine in the world,
I think.'

'There's glow of sunshine in my
heart
(Cool wind, cool the glow):
There's flood of sunshine in the
world,
I know.'

Now if of these one spoke the truth,
One spoke more or less:
But which was which I will not tell:
You guess.
31 *May* 1864.

MEETING

IF we shall live, we live:
If we shall die, we die:
If we live we shall meet again:
But to-night, good-bye.
One word, let but one be heard—
What, not one word?

If we sleep we shall wake again
And see to-morrow's light:
If we wake, we shall meet again:
But to-night, good-night.
Good-night, my lost and
found—
Still not a sound?

If we live, we must part:
If we die, we part in pain:
If we die, we shall part
Only to meet again.
By those tears on either cheek,
To-morrow you will speak.

To meet, worth living for:
Worth dying for, to meet.
To meet, worth parting for:
Bitter forgot in sweet.
To meet, worth parting before,
Never to part more.
11 *June* 1864.

TWICE

I TOOK my heart in my hand,
(O my love, O my love),
I said: Let me fall or stand,
Let me live or die,
But this once hear me speak—
(O my love, O my love)—
Yet a woman's words are weak;
You should speak, not I.

You took my heart in your hand
With a friendly smile,
With a critical eye you scanned,
Then set it down,
And said: It is still unripe,
Better wait awhile;
Wait while the skylarks pipe,
Till the corn grows brown.

As you set it down it broke—
Broke, but I did not wince;
I smiled at the speech you spoke,
At your judgment that I heard:
But I have not often smiled
Since then, nor questioned since,
Nor cared for corn-flowers wild,
Nor sung with the singing bird.

I take my heart in my hand,
O my God, O my God,
My broken heart in my hand:
Thou hast seen, judge Thou.
My hope was written on sand,
O my God, O my God:
Now let Thy judgment stand—
Yea, judge me now.

This contemned of a man,
This marred one heedless day,
This heart take Thou to scan
Both within and without:
Refine with fire its gold,
Purge Thou its dross away—
Yea hold it in Thy hold,
Whence none can pluck it out.

I take my heart in my hand—
I shall not die, but live—
Before Thy face I stand;
I, for Thou callest such:
All that I have I bring,
All that I am I give;
Smile Thou and I shall sing,
But shall not question much.

June 1864.

A FARM WALK

THE year stood at its equinox
And bluff the North was blowing,
A bleat of lambs came from the flocks,
Green hardy things were growing;
I met a maid with shining locks
Where milky kine were lowing.

She wore a kerchief on her neck,
Her bare arm showed its dimple,
Her apron spread without a speck,
Her air was frank and simple.
She milked into a wooden pail
And sang a country ditty,
An innocent fond lovers' tale
That was not wise nor witty,
Pathetically rustical,
Too pointless for the city.

She kept in time without a beat
As true as church-bell ringers,
Unless she tapped time with her feet,
Or squeezed it with her fingers;
Her clear unstudied notes were sweet
As many a practised singer's.

I stood a minute out of sight,
Stood silent for a minute,
To eye the pail, and creamy white
The frothing milk within it;

To eye the comely milking maid,
Herself so fresh and creamy.
'Good day to you,' at last I said;
She turned her head to see me:
'Good day,' she said with lifted head;
Her eyes looked soft and dreamy.

And all the while she milked and milked
The grave cow heavy-laden.
I've seen grand ladies plumed and silked,
But not a sweeter maiden;

But not a sweeter fresher maid
Than this in homely cotton,
Whose pleasant face and silky braid
I have not yet forgotten.

Seven springs have passed since then, as I
Count with a sober sorrow;

Seven springs have come and passed me by,
And spring sets in to-morrow.

I've half a mind to shake myself
Free just for once from London,
To set my work upon the shelf
And leave it done or undone;

To run down by the early train,
Whirl down with shriek and whistle,
And feel the bluff North blow again,
And mark the sprouting thistle
Set up on waste patch of the lane
Its green and tender bristle;

And spy the scarce-blown violet banks,
Crisp primrose leaves and others,
And watch the lambs leap at their pranks
And butt their patient mothers.—

Alas one point in all my plan
My serious thoughts demur to:
Seven years have passed for maid and man,
Seven years have passed for her too;

Perhaps my rose is overblown,
Not rosy or too rosy;
Perhaps in farmhouse of her own
Some husband keeps her cosy,
Where I should show a face unknown.—
Good-bye, my wayside posy.

11 *July* 1864.

UNDER WILLOWS

UNDER willows among the graves
One was walking, ah welladay!
Where each willow her green boughs waves,
Come April prime, come May.
Under willows among the graves
She met her lost love, ah welladay!
Where in Autumn each wild wind raves
And whirls sere leaves away.

He looked at her with a smile,
She looked at him with a sigh,
Both paused to look awhile:
Then he passed by,—
Passed by and whistled a tune:
She stood silent and still:
It was the sunniest day in June,
Yet one felt a chill.

Under willows among the graves
I know a certain black black pool
Scarce wrinkled when Autumn raves.
Under the turf is cool;
Under the water it must be cold:
Winter comes cold when Summer's past:
Though she live to be old, so old,
She shall die at last.

27 *July* 1864.

A SKETCH

THE blindest buzzard that I know
Does not wear wings to spread and stir;
Nor does my special mole wear fur,
And grub among the roots below:
He sports a tail indeed, but then
It's to a coat: he's man with men:
His quill is cut to a pen.

In other points our friend's a mole.
A buzzard, beyond scope of speech:
He sees not what's within his reach,

Misreads the part, ignores the whole;
Misreads the part, so reads in vain,
Ignores the whole though patent plain,—
Misreads both parts again.

My blindest buzzard that I know,
My special mole, when will you see?
Oh no, you must not look at me,
There's nothing hid for me to show.
I might show facts as plain as day:
But, since your eyes are blind, you'd say,
'Where? What?' and turn away.

15 *August* 1864.

BIRD OR BEAST?

Did any bird come flying
After Adam and Eve,
When the door was shut against them
And they sat down to grieve?

I think not Eve's peacock
Splendid to see,
And I think not Adam's eagle;
But a dove may be.

Did any beast come pushing
Through the thorny hedge
Into the thorny thistly world,
Out from Eden's edge?

I think not a lion,
Though his strength is such;
But an innocent loving lamb
May have done as much.

If the dove preached from her bough,
And the lamb from his sod,
The lamb and the dove
Were preachers sent from God.

15 *August* 1864.

SONGS IN A CORNFIELD

A song in a cornfield
Where corn begins to fall,
Where reapers are reaping,
Reaping one, reaping all.
Sing pretty Lettice,
Sing Rachel, sing May;
Only Marian cannot sing
While her sweetheart's away.

Where is he gone to
And why does he stay?
He came across the green sea
But for a day,
Across the deep green sea
To help with the hay.
His hair was curly yellow
And his eyes were grey,
He laughed a merry laugh
And said a sweet say.
Where is he gone to
That he comes not home?
To-day or to-morrow
He surely will come.
Let him haste to joy,
Lest he lag for sorrow,
For one weeps to-day
Who'll not weep to-morrow;
To-day she must weep
For gnawing sorrow,
To-night she may sleep
And not wake to-morrow.

May sang with Rachel
In the waxing warm weather,
Lettice sang with them,
They sang all together:—

'Take the wheat in your arm
Whilst day is broad above,
Take the wheat to your bosom,
But not a false false love.

Out in the fields
Summer heat gloweth,
Out in the fields
Summer wind bloweth,
Out in the fields
Summer friend showeth,
Out in the fields
Summer wheat groweth :
But in the winter,
When summer heat is dead
And summer wind has veered
And summer friend has fled,
Only summer wheat remaineth,
White cakes and bread.
Take the wheat, clasp the wheat
That's food for maid and dove :
Take the wheat to your bosom,
But not a false false love.'

A silence of full noontide heat
Grew on them at their toil :
The farmer's dog woke up from sleep,
The green snake hid her coil
Where grass stood thickest ; bird and beast
Sought shadows as they could,
The reaping men and women paused
And sat down where they stood ;
They ate and drank and were refreshed,
For rest from toil is good.

While the reapers took their ease,
Their sickles lying by,
Rachel sang a second strain,
And singing seemed to sigh :

'There goes the swallow—
Could we but follow !
Hasty swallow, stay,
Point us out the way ;
Look back, swallow, turn back, swallow, stop, swallow.

'There went the swallow—
Too late to follow :
Lost our note of way,
Lost our chance to-day ;
Good-bye, swallow, sunny swallow, wise swallow.

'After the swallow
All sweet things follow :
All things go their way,
Only we must stay,
Must not follow ; good-bye, swallow, good swallow.'

Then listless Marian raised her head
Among the nodding sheaves ;
Her voice was sweeter than that voice ;
She sang like one who grieves :
Her voice was sweeter than its wont
Among the nodding sheaves ;
All wondered while they heard her sing
Like one who hopes and grieves :—

'Deeper than the hail can smite,
Deeper than the frost can bite,
Deep asleep through day and night,
Our delight.

'Now thy sleep no pang can break,
No to-morrow bid thee wake,
Not our sobs who sit and ache
For thy sake.

'Is it dark or light below ?
Oh but is it cold like snow ?
Dost thou feel the green things grow
Fast or slow ?

'Is it warm or cold beneath,
Oh but is it cold like death ?
Cold like death, without a breath,
Cold like death ?'

If he comes to-day,
He will find her weeping ;
If he comes to-morrow,
He will find her sleeping ;
If he comes the next day,
He'll not find her at all—
He may tear his curling hair,
Beat his breast, and call.

26 *August* 1864.

IF I HAD WORDS

If I had words, if I had words
At least to vent my misery :—
But muter than the speechless herds
I have no voice wherewith to cry.
I have no strength to lift my hands,
I have no heart to lift mine eye,
My soul is bound with brazen bands,
My soul is crushed and like to die.
My thoughts that wander here and there,
That wander wander listlessly,
Bring nothing back to cheer my care,
Nothing that I may live thereby.
My heart is broken in my breast,
My breath is but a broken sigh—
Oh if there be a land of rest
It is far off, it is not nigh.
If I had wings as hath a dove,
If I had wings that I might fly,
I yet would seek the land of love
Where fountains run which run not dry :
Though there be none that road to tell,
And long that road is verily :
Then if I lived I should do well,
And if I died I should but die.

If I had wings as hath a dove,
I would not sift the what and why,
I would make haste to find out Love,
If not to find at least to try.
I would make haste to Love, my rest—
To Love, my truth that doth not lie :
Then if I lived it might be best,
Or if I died I could but die.

3 *September* 1864.

JESSIE CAMERON

'Jessie, Jessie Cameron,
Hear me but this once,' quoth he.
'Good luck go with you, neighbour's son,
But I'm no mate for you,' quoth she.
Day was verging toward the night
There beside the moaning sea :
Dimness overtook the light
There where the breakers be.
'O Jessie, Jessie Cameron,
I have loved you long and true.'—
'Good luck go with you, neighbour's son,
But I'm no mate for you.'

She was a careless fearless girl,
And made her answer plain,
Outspoken she to earl or churl,
Kindhearted in the main,
But somewhat heedless with her tongue
And apt at causing pain ;
A mirthful maiden she and young,
Most fair for bliss or bane.

'Oh long ago I told you so,
I tell you so to-day:
Go you your way, and let me go
Just my own free way.'

The sea swept in with moan and foam,
Quickening the stretch of sand;
They stood almost in sight of home;
He strove to take her hand.
'Oh can't you take your answer then,
And won't you understand?
For me you're not the man of men,
I've other plans are planned.
You're good for Madge, or good for Cis,
Or good for Kate, may be:
But what's to me the good of this
While you're not good for me?'

They stood together on the beach,
They two alone,
And louder waxed his urgent speech,
His patience almost gone:
'Oh say but one kind word to me,
Jessie, Jessie Cameron.'—
'I'd be too proud to beg,' quoth she,
And pride was in her tone.
And pride was in her lifted head,
And in her angry eye,
And in her foot, which might have fled
But would not fly.

Some say that he had gipsy blood,
That in his heart was guile:
Yet he had gone through fire and flood
Only to win her smile.
Some say his grandam was a witch,
A black witch from beyond the Nile,
Who kept an image in a niche
And talked with it the while.

And by her hut far down the lane
Some say they would not pass at night,
Lest they should hear an unked strain
Or see an unked sight.

Alas for Jessie Cameron!—
The sea crept moaning, moaning nigher;
She should have hastened to be-gone,—
The sea swept higher, breaking by her:—
She should have hastened to her home
While yet the west was flushed with fire,—
But now her feet are in the foam,
The sea-foam sweeping higher.
O mother, linger at your door,
And light your lamp to make it plain;
But Jessie she comes home no more,
No more again.

They stood together on the strand,
They only each by each;
Home, her home, was close at hand,
Utterly out of reach.
Her mother in the chimney nook
Heard a startled sea-gull screech,
But never turned her head to look
Towards the darkening beach:
Neighbours here and neighbours there
Heard one scream, as if a bird
Shrilly screaming cleft the air:—
That was all they heard.

Jessie she comes home no more,
Comes home never;
Her lover's step sounds at his door
No more for ever.
And boats may search upon the sea
And search along the river,

But none know where the bodies be ;
Sea-winds that shiver,
Sea-birds that breast the blast,
Sea-waves swelling,
Keep the secret first and last
Of their dwelling.

Whether the tide so hemmed them round
With its pitiless flow
That when they would have gone they found
No way to go ;
Whether she scorned him to the last
With words flung to and fro,
Or clung to him when hope was past,
None will ever know :
Whether he helped or hindered her,
Threw up his life or lost it well,
The troubled sea for all its stir
Finds no voice to tell.

Only watchers by the dying
Have thought they heard one pray
Wordless, urgent ; and replying
One seem to say him nay :
And watchers by the dead have heard
A windy swell from miles away,
With sobs and screams, but not a word
Distinct for them to say :
And watchers out at sea have caught
Glimpse of a pale gleam here or there,
Come and gone as quick as thought,
Which might be hand or hair.

October 1864.

GROWN AND FLOWN

I LOVED my love from green of Spring
Until sere Autumn's fall ;
But now that leaves are withering
How should one love at all ?
One heart's too small
For hunger, cold, love, everything.

I loved my love on sunny days
Until late Summer's wane ;
But now that frost begins to glaze
How should one love again ?
Nay, love and pain
Walk wide apart in diverse ways.

I loved my love—alas to see
That this should be, alas !
I thought that this could scarcely be,
Yet has it come to pass :
Sweet sweet love was,
Now bitter bitter grown to me.

21 *December* 1864.

EVE

'WHILE I sit at the door,
Sick to gaze within,
Mine eye weepeth sore
For sorrow and sin :
As a tree my sin stands
To darken all lands ;
Death is the fruit it bore.

'How have Eden bowers grown
Without Adam to bend them ?
How have Eden flowers blown,
Squandering their sweet breath,
Without me to tend them ?
The Tree of Life was ours,
Tree twelvefold-fruited,
Most lofty tree that flowers,
Most deeply rooted :
I chose the Tree of Death.

'Hadst thou but said me nay,
Adam my brother,
I might have pined away—
I, but none other:
God might have let thee stay
Safe in our garden,
By putting me away
Beyond all pardon.

'I, Eve, sad mother
Of all who must live,
I, not another,
Plucked bitterest fruit to give
My friend, husband, lover.
O wanton eyes, run over!
Who but I should grieve?
Cain hath slain his brother:
Of all who must die mother,
Miserable Eve!'

Thus she sat weeping,
Thus Eve our mother,
Where one lay sleeping
Slain by his brother.
Greatest and least
Each piteous beast
To hear her voice
Forgot his joys
And set aside his feast.

The mouse paused in his walk
And dropped his wheaten stalk:
Grave cattle wagged their heads
In rumination;
The eagle gave a cry
From his cloud station:
Larks on thyme beds
Forbore to mount or sing;
Bees drooped upon the wing;
The raven perched on high
Forgot his ration;
The conies in their rock,
A feeble nation,
Quaked sympathetical;
The mocking-bird left off to mock;
Huge camels knelt as if
In deprecation;
The kind hart's tears were falling;
Chattered the wistful stork;
Dove-voices with a dying fall
Cooed desolation,
Answering grief by grief.

Only the serpent in the dust,
Wriggling and crawling,
Grinned an evil grin and thrust
His tongue out with its fork.

30 *January* 1865.

SHALL I FORGET?

SHALL I forget on this side of the grave?
I promise nothing: you must wait and see,
Patient and brave.
(O my soul, watch with him, and he with me.)

Shall I forget in peace of Paradise?
I promise nothing: follow, friend, and see,
Faithful and wise.
(O my soul, lead the way he walks with me.)

21 *February* 1865.

AMOR MUNDI

'OH where are you going with your love-locks flowing,
On the west wind blowing along this valley track?'
'The downhill path is easy, come with me an it please ye,
We shall escape the uphill by never turning back.'

So they two went together in glowing August weather,
The honey-breathing heather lay to their left and right;
And dear she was to doat on, her swift feet seemed to float on
The air like soft twin pigeons too sportive to alight.

'Oh what is that in heaven where grey cloud-flakes are seven,
Where blackest clouds hang riven just at the rainy skirt?'
'Oh that's a meteor sent us, a message dumb, portentous,
An undeciphered solemn signal of help or hurt.'

'Oh what is that glides quickly where velvet flowers grow thickly,
Their scent comes rich and sickly?'
'A scaled and hooded worm.'
'Oh what's that in the hollow, so pale I quake to follow?'
'Oh that's a thin dead body which waits the eternal term.'

'Turn again, O my sweetest,—turn again, false and fleetest:
This beaten way thou beatest, I fear, is hell's own track.'
'Nay, too steep for hill mounting; nay, too late for cost counting:
This downhill path is easy, but there's no turning back.'

21 *February* 1865.

FROM SUNSET TO RISE STAR

Go from me, summer friends, and tarry not:
I am no summer friend, but wintry cold;
A silly sheep benighted from the fold,
A sluggard with a thorn-choked garden plot.
Take counsel, sever from my lot your lot,
Dwell in your pleasant places, hoard your gold;
Lest you with me should shiver on the wold,
Athirst and hungering on a barren spot.
For I have hedged me with a thorny hedge,
I live alone, I look to die alone.
Yet sometimes when a wind sighs through the sedge
Ghosts of my buried years and friends come back,
My heart goes sighing after swallows flown
On sometime summer's unreturning track.

22 *February* 1865.

MAGGIE A LADY

YOU must not call me Maggie, you must not call me Dear,
For I'm Lady of the Manor now stately to see;
And if there comes a babe, as there may some happy year,
'Twill be little lord or lady at my knee.

Oh but what ails you, my sailor cousin Phil,
That you shake and turn white like a cockcrow ghost?
You're as white as I turned once down by the mill,
When one told me you and ship and crew were lost.

Philip my playfellow, when we were
boy and girl
(It was the Miller's Nancy told
it to me),
Philip with the merry life in lip and
curl,
Philip my playfellow drowned in
the sea!

I thought I should have fainted, but
I did not faint;
I stood stunned at the moment,
scarcely sad,
Till I raised my wail of desolate
complaint
For you, my cousin, brother, all
I had.

They said I looked so pale—some
say so fair—
My lord stopped in passing to
soothe me back to life:
I know I missed a ringlet from my
hair
Next morning; and now I am
his wife.

Look at my gown, Philip, and look
at my ring—
I'm all crimson and gold from
top to toe:
All day long I sit in the sun and
sing,
Where in the sun red roses blush
and blow.

And I'm the rose of roses, says my
lord;
And to him I'm more than the
sun in the sky,
While I hold him fast with the
golden cord
Of a curl, with the eyelash of an
eye.

His mother said fie, and his sisters
cried shame,
His highborn ladies cried shame
from their place:
They said fie when they only heard
my name,
But fell silent when they saw my
face.

Am I so fair, Philip? Philip, did
you think
I was so fair when we played boy
and girl
Where blue forget-me-nots bloomed
on the brink
Of our stream which the mill-
wheel sent awhirl?

If I was fair then, sure I'm fairer
now,
Sitting where a score of servants
stand,
With a coronet on high days for my
brow
And almost a sceptre for my hand.

You're but a sailor, Philip, weather-
beaten brown,
A stranger on land and at home
on the sea,
Coasting as best you may from town
to town:
Coasting along do you often think
of me?

I'm a great lady in a sheltered
bower,
With hands grown white through
having nought to do:
Yet sometimes I think of you hour
after hour
Till I nigh wish myself a child
with you.

23 *February* 1865.

DEAD HOPE

HOPE newborn one pleasant morn
Died at even :
Hope dead lives nevermore,
No not in heaven.

If his shroud were but a cloud
To weep itself away—
Or were he buried underground
To sprout some day !
But dead and gone is dead and gone,
Vainly wept upon.

Nought we place above his face
To mark the spot,
But it shows a barren place
In our lot.

Hope has birth no more on earth
Morn or even ;
Hope dead lives nevermore,
No not in heaven.

15 *March* 1865.

EN ROUTE

WHEREFORE art thou strange, and not my mother ?
Thou hast stolen my heart and broken it :
Would that I might call thy sons 'My brother,'
Call thy daughters 'Sister sweet' :
Lying in thy lap, not in another,
Dying at thy feet.

Farewell, land of love, Italy,
Sister-land of Paradise :
With mine own feet I have trodden thee,
Have seen with mine own eyes :
I remember, thou forgettest me,
I remember thee.

Blessed be the land that warms my heart,
And the kindly clime that cheers,
And the cordial faces clear from art,
And the tongue sweet in mine ears:
Take my heart, its truest tenderest part,
Dear land, take my tears.

June 1865.

ENRICA, 1865

SHE came among us from the South,
And made the North her home awhile ;
Our dimness brightened in her smile,
Our tongue grew sweeter in her mouth.

We chilled beside her liberal glow,
She dwarfed us by her ampler scale,
Her full-blown blossom made us pale—
She Summer-like and we like snow.

We Englishwomen, trim, correct,
All minted in the selfsame mould,
Warm-hearted but of semblance cold,
All-courteous out of self-respect.

She, woman in her natural grace,
Less trammelled she by lore of school,
Courteous by nature not by rule,
Warm-hearted and of cordial face.

So for awhile she made her home
Among us in the rigid North,
She who from Italy came forth
And scaled the Alps and crossed the foam.

But, if she found us like our sea,
Of aspect colourless and chill,
Rock-girt,—like it she found us still
Deep at our deepest, strong and free.

1 *July* 1865.

HUSBAND AND WIFE

'Oh kiss me once before I go,
To make amends for sorrow:
Oh kiss me once before we part,
For we mayn't meet to-morrow.

'And I was wrong to force your will,
And wrong to mar your life:
But kiss me once before we part
Because you are my wife.'

She turned her head and tossed her head,
And puckered up her brow:
'I never kissed you yet,' said she,
'And I'll not kiss you now.

'Though I'm your wife by might and right
And forsworn marriage vow,
I never loved you yet,' said she,
'And I don't love you now.'

So he went sailing on the sea,
And she sat crossed and dumb,
While he went sailing on the sea
Where the storm-winds come.

He'd been away a month and day
Counting from morn to morn:
And many buds had turned to leaves,
And many lambs been born;
And many buds had turned to flowers
For Spring was in a glow,
When she was laid upon her bed
As white and cold as snow.

'Oh let me kiss my baby once,
Once before I die:
And bring it sometimes to my grave
To teach it where I lie.

'And tell my husband, when he comes
Safe back from sea,
To love the baby that I leave
If ever he loved me:

'And tell him, not for might or right
Or forsworn marriage vow,
But for the helpless baby's sake,
I would have kissed him now.'

12 *July* 1865.

ITALIA, IO TI SALUTO

To come back from the sweet South, to the North
Where I was born, bred, look to die;
Come back to do my day's work in its day,
Play out my play—
Amen, amen, say I.

To see no more the country half my own,
Nor hear the half familiar speech,
Amen, I say; I turn to that bleak North
Whence I came forth—
The South lies out of reach.

But when our swallows fly back to
the South,
To the sweet South, to the sweet
South,
The tears may come again into my
eyes
On the old wise,
And the sweet name to my mouth.
Towards July 1865.

WHAT TO DO?

O MY love and my own own deary!
What shall I do? my love is weary.
Sleep, O friend, on soft downy pillow,
Pass, O friend, as wind or as billow,
And I'll wear the willow.

No stone at his head be set,
A swelling turf be his coverlet,
Bound round with a graveyard
wattle,
Hedged round from the trampling
cattle
And the children's prattle.

I myself, instead of a stone,
Will sit by him to dwindle and
moan:
Sit and weep with a bitter weeping,
Sit and weep where my love lies
sleeping,
While my life goes creeping.
4 *August* 1865.

A DAUGHTER OF EVE.

A FOOL I was to sleep at noon,
And wake when night is chilly
Beneath the comfortless cold moon;
A fool to pluck my rose too soon,
A fool to snap my lily.

My garden-plot I have not kept;
Faded and all-forsaken,
I weep as I have never wept:
Oh it was summer when I slept,
It's winter now I waken.

Talk what you please of future
Spring
And sun-warmed sweet to-
morrow:—
Stripped bare of hope and every-
thing,
No more to laugh, no more to
sing,
I sit alone with sorrow.

30 *September* 1865.

A DIRGE

WHY were you born when the snow
was falling?
You should have come to the
cuckoo's calling,
Or when grapes are green in the
cluster,
Or at least when lithe swallows
muster
For their far off flying
From summer dying.

Why did you die when the lambs
were cropping?
You should have died at the apples'
dropping,
When the grasshopper comes to
trouble,
And the wheat-fields are sodden
stubble,
And all winds go sighing
For sweet things dying.

21 *November* 1865.

AN 'IMMURATA' SISTER

LIFE flows down to death; we cannot bind
That current that it should not flee:
Life flows down to death, as rivers find
The inevitable sea.

Men work and think, but women feel;
And so (for I'm a woman, I)
And so I should be glad to die,
And cease from impotence of zeal,
And cease from hope, and cease from dread,
And cease from yearnings without gain,
And cease from all this world of pain,
And be at peace among the dead.

Hearts that die, by death renew their youth,
Lightened of this life that doubts and dies;
Silent and contented, while the Truth
Unveiled makes them wise.

Why should I seek and never find
That something which I have not had?
Fair and unutterably sad
The world hath sought time out of mind;
The world hath sought and I have sought,—
Ah empty world and empty I!
For we have spent our strength for nought,
And soon it will be time to die.

Sparks fly upward toward thei fount of fire,
Kindling, flashing, hovering:—
Kindle, flash, my soul; moun higher and higher,
Thou whole burnt-offering!

Circa 1865.

ONCE FOR ALL
(MARGARET)

I SAID: This is a beautiful fresh rose.
I said: I will delight me with its scent,
Will watch its lovely curve of languishment,
Will watch its leaves unclose, its heart unclose.
I said: Old earth has put away her snows,
All living things make merry to their bent,
A flower is come for every flower that went
In autumn, the sun glows, the south wind blows.
So walking in a garden of delight
I came upon one sheltered shadowed nook
Where broad leaf shadows veiled the day with night,
And there lay snow unmelted by the sun:—
I answered: Take who will the path I took,
Winter nips once for all; love is but one.

8 *January* 1866.

A SMILE AND A SIGH

A SMILE because the nights are short!
And every morning brings such pleasure

Of sweet love-making, harmless sport :
Love that makes and finds its treasure ;
Love, treasure without measure.

A sigh because the days are long !
Long long these days that pass in sighing,
A burden saddens every song.
While time lags which should be flying,
We live who would be dying.

February 1866.

IN A CERTAIN PLACE

I FOUND Love in a certain place
Asleep and cold — or cold and dead ?—
All ivory-white upon his bed,
All ivory-white his face.
His hands were folded
On his quiet breast,
To his figure laid at rest
Chilly bed was moulded.

His hair hung lax about his brow,
I had not seen his face before :
Or, if I saw it once, it wore
Another aspect now.
No trace of last night's sorrow,
No shadow of to-morrow :
All at peace (thus all sorrows cease),
All at peace.

I wondered : Were his eyes
Soft or falcon-clear ?
I wondered : As he lies
Does he feel me near ?
In silence my heart spoke
And wondered : If he woke
And found me sitting nigh him
And felt me sitting by him,
If life flushed to his cheek,
He living man with men,
Then if I heard him speak
Oh should I know him then ?

6 *March* 1866.

CANNOT SWEETEN

'IF that's water you wash your hands in,
Why is it black as ink is black ?'
'Because my hands are foul with my folly :
Oh the lost time that comes not back !'

'If that's water you bathe your feet in,
Why is it red as wine is red ?'
'Because my feet sought blood in their goings,
Red, red is the track they tread.'

'Slew you mother or slew you father
That your foulness passeth not by ?'
'Not father, and oh not mother :
I slew my love with an evil eye.'

'Slew you sister or slew you brother
That in peace you have not a part ?'
'Not brother and oh not sister :
I slew my love with a hardened heart.

'He loved me because he loved me,
Not for grace or beauty I had :
He loved me because he loved me :
For his loving me I was glad.

'Yet I loved him not for his loving,
While I played with his love and truth,
Not loving him for his loving,
Wasting his joy, wasting his youth.

I ate his life as a banquet,
I drank his life as new wine,
I fattened upon his leanness,
Mine to flourish and his to pine.

'So his life fled as running water,
So it perished as water spilt:
If black my hands and my feet as scarlet,
Blacker, redder my heart of guilt.

'Cold as a stone, as hard, as heavy:
All my sighs ease it no whit,
All my tears make it no cleaner,
Dropping, dropping, dropping on it.'

8 *March* 1866.

OF MY LIFE

I WEARY of my life
Through the long sultry day,
While happy creatures play
Their harmless lives away:—
What is my life?

I weary of my life
Through the slow tedious night,
While, earth and heaven's delight,
The moon walks forth in white:—
What is my life?

If I might, I would die:
My soul should flee away
To day that is not day
Where sweet souls sing and say—
If I might die!

If I might, I would die:
My body out of sight,
All night that is not night
My soul should walk in white—
If I might die!

15 *May* 1866.

SONG

OH what comes over the sea,
Shoals and quicksands past;
And what comes home to me,
Sailing slow, sailing fast?

A wind comes over the sea
With a moan in its blast;
But nothing comes home to me,
Sailing slow, sailing fast.

Let me be, let me be,
For my lot is cast:
Land or sea all's one to me,
And sail it slow or fast.

11 *June* 1866.

FROM METASTASIO

FIRST, last, and dearest,
My love, mine own,
Thee best belovèd,
Thee love alone,
Once and for ever
So love I thee.

First as a suppliant
Love makes his moan,
Then as a monarch
Sets up his throne:
Once and for ever—
So love I thee.

Circa 1868.

AUTUMN VIOLETS

KEEP love for youth, and violets for the spring :
Or if these bloom when worn-out autumn grieves
Let them lie hid in double shade of leaves,
Their own, and others' dropped down withering ;
For violets suit when home birds build and sing,
Not when the outbound bird a passage cleaves ;
Not with dry stubble of mown harvest sheaves,
But when the green world buds to blossoming.
Keep violets for the spring, and love for youth,
Love that should dwell with beauty, mirth, and hope :
Or if a later sadder love be born,
Let this not look for grace beyond its scope,
But give itself, nor plead for answering truth—
A grateful Ruth tho' gleaning scanty corn.

Before 1869.

THEY DESIRE A BETTER COUNTRY

I

I WOULD not if I could undo my past,
Tho' for its sake my future is a blank ;
My past for which I have myself to thank,
For all its faults and follies first and last.
I would not cast anew the lot once cast,
Or launch a second ship for one that sank,
Or drug with sweets the bitterness I drank,
Or break by feasting my perpetual fast.
I would not if I could : for much more dear
Is one remembrance than a hundred joys,
More than a thousand hopes in jubilee ;
Dearer the music of one tearful voice
That unforgotten calls and calls to me,
'Follow me here, rise up, and follow here.'

II

What seekest thou, far in the unknown land ?
In hope I follow joy gone on before ;
In hope and fear persistent more and more,
As the dry desert lengthens out its sand.
Whilst day and night I carry in my hand
The golden key to ope the golden door
Of golden home ; yet mine eye weepeth sore,
For long the journey is that makes no stand.
And who is this that veiled doth walk with thee ?
Lo this is Love that walketh at my right ;

One exile holds us both, and we are bound
To selfsame home-joys in the land of light.
Weeping thou walkest with him; weepeth he?—
Some sobbing weep, some weep and make no sound.

III

A dimness of a glory glimmers here
Thro' veils and distance from the space remote;
A faintest far vibration of a note
Reaches to us and seems to bring us near;
Causing our face to glow with braver cheer,
Making the serried mist to stand afloat,
Subduing languor with an antidote,
And strengthening love almost to cast out fear:
Till for one moment golden city walls
Rise looming on us, golden walls of home,
Light of our eyes until the darkness falls;
Then thro' the outer darkness burdensome
I hear again the tender voice that calls,
'Follow me hither, follow, rise, and come.'

Before 1870.

BY WAY OF REMEMBRANCE

Remember, if I claim too much of you,
I claim it of my brother and my friend:
Have patience with me till the hidden end—
Bitter or sweet, in mercy shut from view.
Pay me my due; though I to pay your due
Am all too poor, and past what will can mend:
Thus of your bounty you must give and lend,
Still unrepaid by aught I look to do.
Still unrepaid by aught of mine on earth:
But overpaid, please God, when recompense
Beyond the mystic Jordan and new birth
Is dealt to virtue as to innocence:
When Angels singing praises in their mirth
Have borne you in their arms and fetched you hence.

Will you be there? my yearning heart has cried.
Ah me, my love, my love, shall I be there,
To sit down in your glory and to share
Your gladness, glowing as a virgin bride?
Or will another, dearer, fairer-eyed,
Sit nigher to you in your jubilee,
And mindful one of other will you be
Borne higher and higher on joy's ebbless tide?
Yea, if I love I will not grudge you this:
I too shall float upon that heavenly sea
And sing my joyful praises without ache;

Your overflow of joy shall gladden me,
My whole heart shall sing praises for your sake,
And find its own fulfilment in your bliss.

In Resurrection is it awfuller
That rising of the All or of the Each—
Of all kins of all nations of all speech,
Or one by one of *him* and *him* and *her?*
When dust reanimate begins to stir,
Here, there, beyond, beyond, reach beyond reach;
While every wave disgorges on its beach,
Live or dead-in-life, some seafarer.
In Resurrection, on the day of days,
That day of mourning throughout all the earth,
In Resurrection may we meet again:
No more with stricken hearts to part in twain;
As once in sorrow one, now one in mirth,
One in our resurrection-songs of praise.

I love you and you know it—this at least,
This comfort is mine own in all my pain:
You know it, and can never doubt again,
And love's mere self is a continual feast:
Not oath of mine nor blessing-word of priest
Could make my love more certain or more plain.

Life as a rolling moon doth wax and wane—
O weary moon, still rounding, still decreased!
Life wanes: and when Love folds his wings above
Tired joy, and less we feel his conscious pulse,
Let us go fall asleep, dear Friend, in peace;—
A little while, and age and sorrow cease;
A little while, and love reborn annuls
Loss and decay and death—and all is love.

Towards October 1870.

AN ECHO FROM WILLOW-WOOD

O ye, all ye that walk in willow-wood.
D. G. ROSSETTI.

Two gazed into a pool, he gazed and she,
Not hand in hand, yet heart in heart, I think,
Pale and reluctant on the water's brink,
As on the brink of parting which must be.
Each eyed the other's aspect, she and he,
Each felt one hungering heart leap up and sink,
Each tasted bitterness which both must drink,
There on the brink of life's dividing sea.
Lilies upon the surface, deep below
Two wistful faces craving each for each,

Resolute and reluctant without speech :—
A sudden ripple made the faces flow,
One moment joined, to vanish out of reach :
So those hearts joined, and ah were parted so.

Circa 1870.

THE GERMAN-FRENCH CAMPAIGN

1870-1871

These two pieces, written during the suspense of a great nation's agony, aim at expressing human sympathy, not political bias.

I

THY BROTHER'S BLOOD CRIETH

ALL her corn-fields rippled in the sunshine,
All her lovely vines, sweets-laden, bowed ;
Yet some weeks to harvest and to vintage :
When, as one man's hand, a cloud
Rose and spread, and, blackening, burst asunder
In rain and fire and thunder.

Is there nought to reap in the day of harvest ?
Hath the vine in her day no fruit to yield ?
Yea, men tread the press, but not for sweetness,
And they reap a red crop from the field.
Build barns, ye reapers, garner all aright,
Though your souls be called to-night.

A cry of tears goes up from blackened homesteads,
A cry of blood goes up from reeking earth :
Tears and blood have a cry that pierces Heaven
Through all its Hallelujah swells of mirth ;
God hears their cry, and though He tarry, yet
He doth not forget.

Mournful Mother, prone in dust and weeping,
Who shall comfort thee for those who are not ?
As thou didst, men do to thee ; and heap the measure
And heat the furnace sevenfold hot :
As thou once, now these to thee—who pitieth thee
From sea to sea ?

O thou King, terrible in strength, and building
Thy strong future on thy past !
Though he drink the last, the King of Sheshach,
Yet he shall drink at the last.
Art thou greater than great Babylon
Which lies overthrown ?

Take heed, ye unwise among the people ;
O ye fools, when will ye understand ?—
He that planted the ear shall He not hear,
Nor He smite who formed the hand ?
'Vengeance is Mine, is Mine,' thus saith the Lord :
O Man, put up thy sword.

2

'TO-DAY FOR ME'

SHE sitteth still who used to dance,
ıe weepeth sore and more and more :—
et us sit with thee weeping sore,
O fair France.

She trembleth as the days advance
Vho used to be so light of heart :—
'e in thy trembling bear a part,
Sister France.

Her eyes shine tearful as they glance :
Vho shall give back my slaughtered sons ?
3ind up,' she saith, 'my wounded ones.'—
Alas, France !

She struggles in a deathly trance,
; in a dream her pulses stir,
ıe hears the nations calling her,
'France, France, France !'

Thou people of the lifted lance,
rbear her tears, forbear her blood;
ll back, roll back, thy whelming flood,
Back from France.

Eye not her loveliness askance,
rge not for her a galling chain :
ave her at peace to bloom again,
Vine-clad France.

A time there is for change and chance,
time for passing of the cup :
And One abides can yet bind up
Broken France.

A time there is for change and chance :
Who next shall drink the trembling cup,
Wring out its dregs and suck them up
After France ?

Towards January 1871.

VENUS'S LOOKING-GLASS.

I MARKED where lovely Venus and her court
With song and dance and merry laugh went by ;
Weightless, their wingless feet seemed made to fly,
Bound from the ground, and in mid air to sport.
Left far behind I heard the dolphins snort,
Tracking their goddess with a wistful eye,
Around whose head white doves rose, wheeling high
Or low, and cooed after their tender sort.
All this I saw in Spring. Through summer heat
I saw the lovely Queen of Love no more.
But when flushed Autumn through the woodlands went
I spied sweet Venus walk amid the wheat :
Whom seeing, every harvester gave o'er
His toil, and laught and hoped and was content.

October 1872.

LOVE LIES BLEEDING

Love, that is dead and buried, yesterday
Out of his grave rose up before my face;
No recognition in his look, no trace
Of memory in his eyes dust-dimmed and grey;
While I, remembering, found no word to say,
But felt my quickened heart leap in its place;
Caught afterglow thrown back from long-set days,
Caught echoes of all music past away.
Was this indeed to meet?—I mind me yet
In youth we met when hope and love were quick,
We parted with hope dead but love alive:
I mind me how we parted then heart-sick,
Remembering, loving, hopeless, weak to strive:—
Was this to meet? Not so, we have not met.

Circa 1872.

DAYS OF VANITY

A dream that waketh,
Bubble that breaketh,
Song whose burden sigheth,
A passing breath,
Smoke that vanisheth,—
Such is life that dieth.

A flower that fadeth,
Fruit the tree sheddeth,
Trackless bird that flieth,
Summer time brief,—
Falling of the leaf,—
Such is life that dieth.

A scent exhaling,
Snow waters failing,
Morning dew that drieth,
A windy blast,
Lengthening shadows cast,
Such is life that dieth.

A scanty measure,
Rust-eaten treasure,
Spending that nought buyeth,
Moth on the wing,
Toil unprofiting,—
Such is life that dieth.

Morrow by morrow
Sorrow breeds sorrow,
For this my song sigheth;
From day to night
We lapse out of sight.—
Such is life that dieth.

Before 1873.

A BIRD SONG

It's a year almost that I have n
seen her:
Oh last summer green things we
greener,
Brambles fewer, the blue sky blue

It's surely summer, for there's
swallow:
Come one swallow, his mate w
follow,
The bird-race quicken, and whe
and thicken.

h happy swallow whose mate will follow
er height, o'er hollow! I'd be a swallow,
o build this weather one nest together.

Before 1873.

COR MIO

ILL sometimes in my secret heart of hearts
I say 'Cor mio' when I remember you,
And thus I yield us both one tender due,
elding one whole of two divided parts.
n Friend, too wise or unwise for such arts,
Ah noble Friend, silent and strong and true,
Would you have given me roses for the rue
or which I bartered roses in love's marts?
late in autumn one forgets the spring,
Forgets the summer with its opulence,
ne callow birds that long have found a wing,
The swallows that more lately got them hence:
ill anything like spring, will anything
Like summer, rouse one day the slumbering sense?

Circa 1875.

MEETING

SAID good-bye in hope;
But, now we meet again,
I have no hope at all
Of anything but pain,—
Our parting and our meeting
Alike in vain.

Hope on through all your life
Until the end, dear friend:
Live through your noble life
Where joy and promise blend—
I too will live my life
Until the end.

Long may your vine entwine,
Long may your fig-tree spread,
Their paradise of shade
Above your cherished head:
My shelter was a gourd,
And it is dead.

Yet, when out of a grave
We are gathered home at last,
Then may we own life spilt
No good worth holding fast:—
Death had its bitterness,
But it is past.

Circa 1875.

A GREEN CORNFIELD

'And singing still dost soar and soaring ever singest.'

THE earth was green, the sky was blue:
I saw and heard one sunny morn
A skylark hang between the two,
A singing speck above the corn;

A stage below, in gay accord,
White butterflies danced on the wing,
And still the singing skylark soared,
And silent sank and soared to sing.

The cornfield stretched a tender
green
To right and left beside my walks;
I knew he had a nest unseen
Somewhere among the million
stalks.

And as I paused to hear his song
While swift the sunny moments
slid,
Perhaps his mate sat listening long,
And listened longer than I did.

Before 1876.

A BRIDE SONG

THROUGH the vales to my love!
To the happy small nest of home
Green from basement to roof;
Where the honey-bees come
To the window-sill flowers,
And dive from above,
Safe from the spider that weaves
Her warp and her woof
In some outermost leaves.

Through the vales to my love!
In sweet April hours
All rainbows and showers,
While dove answers dove,—
In beautiful May,
When the orchards are tender
And frothing with flowers,—
In opulent June
When the wheat stands up slender
By sweet-smelling hay,
And half the sun's splendour
Descends to the moon.

Through the vales to my love!
Where the turf is so soft to the feet
And the thyme makes it sweet,
And the stately foxglove
Hangs silent its exquisite bells;
And where water wells
The greenness grows greener,
And bulrushes stand
Round a lily to screen her.

Nevertheless, if this land,
Like a garden to smell and to sigh
Were turned to a desert of sand;
Stripped bare of delight,
All its best gone to worst,
For my feet no repose,
No water to comfort my thirst,
And heaven like a furnace above,
The desert would be
As gushing of waters to me,
The wilderness be as a rose,
If it led me to thee,
O my love.

Before 1876.

CONFLUENTS

As rivers seek the sea,
Much more deep than they,
So my soul seeks thee
Far away;
As running rivers moan
On their course alone,
So I moan
Left alone.

As the delicate rose
To the sun's sweet strength
Doth herself unclose,
Breadth and length;
So spreads my heart to thee
Unveiled utterly,
I to thee
Utterly.

As morning dew exhales
Sunwards pure and free

So my spirit fails
After thee.
As dew leaves not a trace
On the green earth's face;
I, no trace
On thy face.

Its goal the river knows,
Dewdrops find a way,
Sunlight cheers the rose
In her day:
Shall I, lone sorrow past,
Find thee at the last?
Sorrow past,
Thee at last?

Before 1876.

BIRD RAPTURES

HE sunrise wakes the lark to sing,
The moonrise wakes the nightingale.
ome darkness, moonrise, everything
That is so silent, sweet, and pale,
Come, so ye wake the nightingale.

Iake haste to mount, thou wistful moon,
Make haste to wake the nightingale:
et silence set the world in tune
To hearken to that wordless tale
Which warbles from the nightingale.

herald skylark, stay thy flight
One moment, for a nightingale
loods us with sorrow and delight.
To-morrow thou shalt hoist the sail;
Leave us to-night the nightingale.

Before 1876.

VALENTINES TO MY MOTHER

1876

FAIRER than younger beauties, more beloved
Than many a wife,
By stress of Time's vicissitudes unmoved
From settled calm of life;

Endearing rectitude to those who watch
The verdict of your face,
Raising and making gracious those who catch
A semblance of your grace:

With kindly lips of welcome, and with pleased
Propitious eyes benign,
Accept a kiss of homage from your least
Last Valentine.

1877

OWN Mother dear,
We all rejoicing here
Wait for each other,
Daughter for Mother,
Sister for Brother,
Till each dear face appear
Transfigured by Love's flame
Yet still the same,—
The same yet new,—
My face to you,
Your face to me,
Made lovelier by Love's flame
But still the same;
Most dear to see
In halo of Love's flame,
Because the same.

C. G. for M. F. R.

1878

BLESSED Dear and Heart's Delight,
Companion, Friend, and Mother mine,
Round whom my fears and love entwine,—
With whom I hope to stand and sing
Where angels form the outer ring
Round singing Saints who, clad in white,
Know no more of day or night
Or death or any changeful thing,
Or anything that is not love,
Human love and Love Divine,—
Bid me to that tryst above,
Bless your Valentine.

1879

MOTHER mine,
Whom every year
Doth endear,—
Before sweet Spring
(That sweetest thing
Brimfull of bliss)
Sets all the throng
Of birds a-wooing,
Billing and cooing,—
Your Valentine
Sings you a song,
Gives you a kiss.

1880

MORE shower than shine
Brings sweet St. Valentine;
Warm shine, warm shower,
Bring up sweet flower on flower.
Through shower and shine
Loves you your Valentine,
Through shine, through shower,
Through summer's flush, through autumn's fading hour.

1881

TOO cold almost for hope of Spring
Or firstfruits from the realm of flowers,
Your dauntless Valentine, I bring
One sprig of love, and sing
'Love has no Winter hours.'

If even in this world love is love
(This wintry world which felt the Fall),
What must it be in heaven above
Where love to great and small
Is all in all?

1882

MY blessed Mother dozing in her chair
On Christmas Day seemed an embodied Love,
A comfortable Love with soft brown hair
Softened and silvered to a tint of dove;
A better sort of Venus with an air
Angelical from thoughts that dwell above;
A wiser Pallas in whose body fair
Enshrined a blessed soul looks out thereof.
Winter brought holly then; now Spring has brought
Paler and frailer snowdrops shivering;
And I have brought a simple humble thought—
I her devoted duteous Valentine—
A lifelong thought which thrills this song I sing,
A lifelong love to this dear Saint of mine.

1883

A WORLD of change and loss, a world of death,
Of heart and eyes that fail, of labouring breath,
Of pains to bear and painful deeds to do :—
Nevertheless a world of life to come
And love ; where you're at home, while in our home
Your Valentine rejoices, having you.

1884

ANOTHER year of joy and grief,
Another year of hope and fear :
O Mother, is life long or brief?
We hasten while we linger here.

But, since we linger, love me still
And bless me still, O Mother mine,
While hand in hand we scale life's hill,
You guide, and I your Valentine.

1885

ALL the Robin Redbreasts
Have lived the winter through,
Jenny Wrens have pecked their fill
And found a work to do ;
Families of Sparrows
Have weathered wind and storm
With Rabbit on the stony hill
And Hare upon her form.

You and I, my Mother,
Have lived the winter through,
And still we play our daily parts
And still find work to do :
And still the cornfields flourish,
The olive and the vine,
And still you reign my Queen of Hearts
And I'm your Valentine.

1886

WINTER'S latest snowflake is the snowdrop flower,
Yellow crocus kindles the first flame of the Spring,
At that time appointed, at that day and hour,
When life reawakens and hope in everything.

Such a tender snowflake in the wintry weather,
Such a feeble flamelet for chilled St. Valentine,—
But blest be any weather which finds us still together,
My pleasure and my treasure, O blessed Mother mine.

MIRRORS OF LIFE AND DEATH

THE mystery of Life, the mystery
Of Death, I see
Darkly as in a glass ;
Their shadows pass,
And talk with me.

As the flush of a Morning Sky,
As a Morning Sky colourless—
Each yields its measure of light
To a wet world or a dry ;
Each fares through day to night
With equal pace,
And then each one
Is done.

As the Sun with glory and grace
In his face,
Benignantly hot,
Graciously radiant and keen,
Ready to rise and to run,—
Not without spot,
Not even the Sun.

As the Moon
On the wax, on the wane,
With night for her noon;
Vanishing soon,
To appear again.

As Roses that droop
Half warm, half chill, in the languid
May,
And breathe out a scent
Sweet and faint;
Till the wind gives one swoop
To scatter their beauty away.

As Lilies a multitude,
One dipping, one rising, one sinking,
On rippling waters, clear blue
And pure for their drinking;
One new dead, and one opened anew,
And all good.

As a cankered pale Flower,
With death for a dower,
Each hour of its life half dead;
With death for a crown
Weighing down
Its head.

As an Eagle, half strength and half
grace,
Most potent to face
Unwinking the splendour of light;
Harrying the East and the West,
Soaring aloft from our sight;
Yet one day or one night dropped
to rest
On the low common earth
Of his birth.

As a Dove,
Not alone,
In a world of her own
Full of fluttering soft noises
And tender sweet voices
Of love.

As a Mouse
Keeping house
In the fork of a tree,
With nuts in a crevice,
And an acorn or two;
What cares he
For blossoming boughs,
Or the song-singing bevies
Of birds in their glee,
Scarlet, or golden, or blue?

As a Mole grubbing underground;
When it comes to the light
It grubs its way back again,
Feeling no bias of fur
To hamper it in its stir,
Scant of pleasure and pain,
Sinking itself out of sight
Without sound.

As Waters that drop and drop,
Weariness without end,
That drop and never stop,
Wear that nothing can mend,
Till one day they drop—
Stop—
And there's an end,
And matters mend.

As Trees, beneath whose skin
We mark not the sap begin
To swell and rise,
Till the whole bursts out in green:
We mark the falling leaves
When the wide world grieves
And sighs.

As a Forest on fire,
Where maddened creatures desire
Wet mud or wings
Beyond all those things
Which could assuage desire
On this side the flaming fire.

As Wind with a sob and sigh
To which there comes no reply

But a rustle and shiver
From rushes of the river;
As Wind with a desolate moan,
Moaning on alone.

As a Desert all sand,
Blank, neither water nor land
For solace or dwelling or culture,
Where the storms and the wild creatures howl;
Given over to lion and vulture,
To ostrich and jackal and owl:
Yet somewhere an oasis lies;
There waters arise
To nourish one seedling of balm
Perhaps, or one palm.

As the Sea,
Murmuring, shifting, swaying;
One time sunnily playing,
One time wrecking and slaying;
In whichever mood it be,
Worst or best,
Never at rest.

As still Waters and deep,
As shallow Waters that brawl,
As rapid Waters that leap
To their fall.

As Music, as Colour, as Shape,
Keys of rapture and pain
Turning in vain
In a lock which turns not again,
While breaths and moments escape.

As Spring, all bloom and desire;
As Summer, all gift and fire;
As Autumn, a dying glow;
As Winter, with nought to show:

Winter which lays its dead all out of sight,
All clothed in white,
All waiting for the long-awaited light.

Before 1878.

AN OCTOBER GARDEN

In my Autumn garden I was fain
To mourn among my scattered roses;
Alas for that last rosebud which uncloses
To Autumn's languid sun and rain
When all the world is on the wane!
Which has not felt the sweet constraint of June,
Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden walk,
You are but coarse compared with roses:
More choice, more dear that rosebud which uncloses,
Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,
That least and last which cold winds balk;
A rose it is though least and last of all,
A rose to me though at the fall.

Before 1878.

FREAKS OF FASHION

Such a hubbub in the nests,
Such a bustle and squeak!
Nestlings, guiltless of a feather,
Learning just to speak,
Ask—'And how about the fashions?'
From a cavernous beak.

Perched on bushes, perched on hedges,
Perched on firm hahas,
Perched on anything that holds them,
Gay papas and grave mammas
Teach the knowledge-thirsty nestlings:
Hear the gay papas.

Robin says: 'A scarlet waistcoat
Will be all the wear,
Snug, and also cheerful-looking
For the frostiest air,
Comfortable for the chest too
When one comes to plume and pair.'

'Neat grey hoods will be in vogue,'
Quoth a Jackdaw: 'glossy grey,
Setting close, yet setting easy,
Nothing fly-away;
Suited to our misty mornings,
À la négligée.'

Flushing salmon, flushing sulphur,
Haughty Cockatoos
Answer—'Hoods may do for mornings,
But for evenings choose
High head-dresses, curved like crescents
Such as well-bred persons use.'

'Top-knots, yes; yet more essential
Still, a train or tail,'
Screamed the Peacock: 'gemmed and lustrous,
Not too stiff, and not too frail;
Those are best which rearrange as
Fans, and spread or trail.'

Spoke the Swan, entrenched behind
An inimitable neck:
'After all, there's nothing sweeter
For the lawn or lake
Than simple white, if fine and flaky
And absolutely free from speck.'

'Yellow,' hinted a Canary,
'Warmer, not less *distingué*.'
'Peach colour,' put in a Lory,
'Cannot look *outré*.'
'All the colours are in fashion,
And are right,' the Parrots say.

'Very well. But do contrast
Tints harmonious,'
Piped a Blackbird, justly proud
Of bill aurigerous;
'Half the world may learn a lesson
As to that from us.'

Then a Stork took up the word:
'Aim at height and *chic*:
Not high heels, they're common; somehow,
Stilted legs, not thick,
Nor yet thin:' he just glanced downward
And snapped-to his beak.

Here a rustling and a whirring,
As of fans outspread,
Hinted that mammas felt anxious
Lest the next thing said
Might prove less than quite judicious,
Or even underbred.

So a mother Auk resumed
The broken thread of speech:
'Let colours sort themselves, my dears,
Yellow, or red, or peach;
The main points, as it seems to me,
We mothers have to teach,

'Are form and texture, elegance,
An air reserved, sublime;
The mode of wearing what we wear
With due regard to month and clime.
But now, let's all compose ourselves,
It's almost breakfast-time.'

A hubbub, a squeak, a bustle!
Who cares to chatter or sing
With delightful breakfast coming?
Yet they whisper under the wing:
'So we may wear whatever we like,
Anything, everything!'

Circa 1878.

YET A LITTLE WHILE

I DREAMED and did not seek: to-day I seek
Who can no longer dream;
But now am all behindhand, waxen weak,
And dazed amid so many things that gleam
Yet are not what they seem.

I dreamed and did not work: to-day I work,
Kept wide awake by care
And loss, and perils dimly guessed to lurk;
I work and reap not, while my life goes bare
And void in wintry air.

I hope indeed; but hope itself is fear
Viewed on the sunny side;
I hope, and disregard the world that's here,
The prizes drawn, the sweet things that betide;
I hope, and I abide.

Before 1879.

PARTED

HAD Fortune parted us,
Fortune is blind;
Had Anger parted us,
Anger unkind—
But since God parts us
Let us part humbly,
Bearing our burden
Bravely and dumbly.

And since there is but one
Heaven, not another,
Let us not close that door
Against each other.
God's Love is higher than mine,
Christ's tenfold proved,
Yet even I would die
For thee, Beloved.

Circa 1880.

TO-DAY'S BURDEN

'ARISE, depart, for this is not your rest.'—
Oh burden of all burdens, still to arise
And still depart nor rest in any wise!
Rolling, still rolling thus from East to West,
Earth journeys on her immemorial quest,
Whom a moon chases in no different guise.
Thus stars pursue their courses, and thus flies
The sun, and thus all creatures manifest
Unrest the common heritage, the ban
Flung broadcast to all humankind, on all
Who live—for, living, all are bound to die.
That which is old, we know that it is man.
These have no rest who sit and dream and sigh,
Nor have those rest who wrestle and who fall.

Circa 1881.

THE KEY-NOTE

WHERE are the songs I used to know,
Where are the notes I used to sing?

I have forgotten everything
I used to know so long ago;
Summer has followed after Spring;
  Now Autumn is so shrunk and sere
I scarcely think a sadder thing
  Can be the Winter of my year.

Yet Robin sings through Winter's rest,
  When bushes put their berries on;
  While they their ruddy jewels don,
He sings out of a ruddy breast;
The hips and haws and ruddy breast
  Make one spot warm where snow-flakes lie;
They break and cheer the unlovely rest
  Of Winter's pause—and why not I?

Before 1882.

HE AND SHE

'SHOULD one of us remember,
  And one of us forget,
I wish I knew what each will do,
  But who can tell as yet?'

'Should one of us remember,
  And one of us forget,
I promise you what I will do—
And I'm content to wait for you,
  And not be sure as yet.'

Before 1882.

'LUSCIOUS AND SORROWFUL'

BEAUTIFUL, tender, wasting away for sorrow;
Thus to-day; and how shall it be with thee to-morrow?
  Beautiful, tender—what else?
    A hope tells.
Beautiful, tender, keeping the jubilee
In the land of home together, past death and sea;
  No more change or death, no more
    Salt sea-shore.

Before 1882.

DE PROFUNDIS

OH why is heaven built so far,
  Oh why is earth set so remote?
I cannot reach the nearest star
    That hangs afloat.

I would not care to reach the moon,
  One round monotonous of change;
Yet even she repeats her tune
    Beyond my range.

I never watch the scattered fire
  Of stars, or sun's far-trailing train,
But all my heart is one desire,
    And all in vain:

For I am bound with fleshly bands,
  Joy, beauty, lie beyond my scope;
I strain my heart, I stretch my hands,
    And catch at hope.

Before 1882.

TEMPUS FUGIT

LOVELY Spring,
A brief sweet thing,
Is swift on the wing;
Gracious Summer,
A slow sweet comer,
Hastens past;
Autumn while sweet
Is all incomplete
With a moaning blast.
Nothing can last,

Can be cleaved unto,
Can be dwelt upon.
It is hurried through,
It is come and gone,
Undone it cannot be done;
It is ever to do,
Ever old, ever new,
Ever waxing old
And lapsing to Winter cold.

Before 1882.

GOLDEN GLORIES

THE buttercup is like a golden cup,
The marigold is like a golden frill,
The daisy with a golden eye looks up,
And golden spreads the flag beside the rill,
And gay and golden nods the daffodil;
The gorsey common swells a golden sea,
The cowslip hangs a head of golden tips,
And golden drips the honey which the bee
Sucks from sweet hearts of flowers and stores and sips.

Before 1882.

JOHNNY

FOUNDED ON AN ANECDOTE OF THE FIRST FRENCH REVOLUTION

JOHNNY had a golden head
Like a golden mop in blow,
Right and left his curls would spread
In a glory and a glow,
And they framed his honest face
Like stray sunbeams out of place.
Long and thick, they half could hide
How threadbare his patched jacket hung;
They used to be his Mother's pride;
She praised them with a tender tongue,
And stroked them with a loving finger
That smoothed and stroked and loved to linger.

On a doorstep Johnny sat,
Up and down the street looked he;
Johnny did not own a hat,
Hot or cold tho' days might be;
Johnny did not own a boot
To cover up his muddy foot.

Johnny's face was pale and thin,
Pale with hunger and with crying;
For his Mother lay within,
Talked and tossed and seemed a-dying,
While Johnny racked his brains to think
How to get her help and drink,

Get her physic, get her tea,
Get her bread and something nice;
Not a penny piece had he,
And scarce a shilling might suffice;
No wonder that his soul was sad,
When not one penny piece he had.

As he sat there thinking, moping,
Because his Mother's wants were many,
Wishing much but scarcely hoping
To earn a shilling or a penny,
A friendly neighbour passed him by,
And questioned him, why did he cry.

Alas his trouble soon was told:
He did not cry for cold or hunger,
Though he was hungry both and cold;
He only felt more weak and younger,
Because he wished so to be old
And apt at earning pence or gold.

Kindly that neighbour was, but poor,
Scant coin had he to give or lend;
And well he guessed there needed more
Than pence or shillings to befriend
The helpless woman in her strait,
So much loved, yet so desolate.

One way he saw, and only one:
He would—he could—not give the advice,
And yet he must: the widow's son
Had curls of gold would fetch their price;
Long curls which might be clipped, and sold
For silver, or perhaps for gold.

Our Johnny, when he understood
Which shop it was that purchased hair,
Ran off as briskly as he could,
And in a trice stood cropped and bare,
Too short of hair to fill a locket,
But jingling money in his pocket.

Precious money—tea and bread,
Physic, ease, for Mother dear,
Better than a golden head:
Yet our hero dropped one tear
When he spied himself close shorn,
Barer much than lamb new-born.

His Mother throve upon the money,
Ate and revived and kissed her son:
But oh when she perceived her Johnny,
And understood what he had done
All and only for her sake,
She sobbed as if her heart must break.

Before 1882.

'HOLLOW-SOUNDING AND MYSTERIOUS'

THERE'S no replying
To the Wind's sighing;
Telling, foretelling,
Dying, undying,
Dwindling and swelling,
Complaining, droning,
Whistling and moaning,
Ever beginning,
Ending, repeating,
Hinting and dinning,
Lagging and fleeting;—
We've no replying
Living or dying
To the Wind's sighing.

What are you telling,
Variable Wind-tone?
What would be teaching,
O sinking, swelling,
Desolate Wind-moan?
Ever for ever
Teaching and preaching,
Never, ah never
Making us wiser.
The earliest riser
Catches no meaning,
The last who hearkens
Garners no gleaning
Of wisdom's treasure,
While the world darkens.

Living or dying,
In pain, in pleasure,
We've no replying
To wordless, flying
Wind's sighing.

Before 1882.

MAIDEN MAY

MAIDEN May sat in her bower,
In her blush-rose bower in flower,
Sweet of scent ;
Sat and dreamed away an hour,
Half content, half uncontent.

'Why should rose blossoms be born,
Tender blossoms, on a thorn,
Though so sweet ?
Never a thorn besets the corn,
Scentless, in its strength complete.

'Why are roses all so frail,
At the mercy of a gale,
Of a breath ?
Yet so sweet and perfect pale,
Still so sweet in life and death.'

Maiden May sat in her bower,
In her blush-rose bower in flower,
Where a linnet
Made one bristling branch the tower
For her nest and young ones in it.

Gay and clear the linnet trills ;
Yet the skylark, only, thrills
Heaven and earth,
When he breasts the height, and fills
Height and depth with song and mirth.

Nightingales which yield to night
Solitary strange delight
Reign alone :
But the lark for all his height
Fills no solitary throne.

'While he sings, a hundred sing ;
Wing their flight, below his wing,
Yet in flight ;
Each a lovely joyful thing
To the measure of its delight.

'Why then should a lark be reckoned
One alone, without a second
Near his throne ?
He in skyward flight unslackened,
In his music, not alone.'

Maiden May sat in her bower ;
Her own face was like a flower
Of the prime,
Half in sunshine, half in shower,
In the year's most tender time.

Her own thoughts in silent song
Musically flowed along,
Wise, unwise,
Wistful, wondering, weak or strong :
As brook shallows sink or rise.

Other thoughts another day,
Maiden May, will surge and sway
Round your heart ;
Wake, and plead, and turn at bay,
Wisdom part, and folly part.

Time not far remote will borrow
Other joys, another sorrow,
All for you ;
Not to-day, and yet to-morrow
Reasoning false and reasoning true.

Wherefore greatest ? Wherefore least ?
Hearts that starve and hearts that feast ?
You and I ?
Stammering Oracles have ceased,
And the whole earth stands at 'why ?'

Underneath all things that be
Lies an unsolved mystery ;
Over all
Spreads a veil impenetrably,
Spreads a dense unlifted pall.

Mystery of mysteries ;
This creation hears and sees
High and low :
Vanity of vanities ;
This we test and *this* we know.

Maiden May, the days of flowering
Nurse you now in sweet embowering,
Sunny days ;
Bright with rainbows all the showering,
Bright with blossoms all the ways.

Close the inlet of your bower,
Close it close with thorn and flower,
Maiden May ;
Lengthen out the shortening hour,—
Morrows are not as to-day.

Stay to-day which wanes too soon,
Stay the sun and stay the moon,
Stay your youth ;
Bask you in the actual noon,
Rest you in the present truth.

Let to-day suffice to-day :
For itself to-morrow may
Fetch its loss,
Aim and stumble, say its say,
Watch and pray and bear its cross.

Before 1882.

TILL TO-MORROW

LONG have I longed, till I am tired
Of longing and desire ;
Farewell my points in vain desired,
My dying fire ;
Farewell all things that die and fail
and tire.

Springtide and youth and useless
pleasure
And all my useless scheming,
My hopes of unattainable treasure,
Dreams not worth dreaming.
Glow-worms that gleam but yield no
warmth in gleaming,—

Farewell all shows that fade in
showing :
My wish and joy stand over
Until to-morrow ; Heaven is glowing
Through cloudy cover ;
Beyond all clouds loves me my
Heavenly Lover.

Before 1882.

DEATH-WATCHES

THE Spring spreads one green lap
of flowers
Which Autumn buries at the fall.
No chilling showers of Autumn
hours
Can stay them or recall ;
Winds sing a dirge, while earth lays
out of sight
Her garment of delight.

The cloven East brings forth the sun
The cloven West doth bury him
What time his gorgeous race is run
And all the world grows dim ;
A funeral moon is lit in heaven's
hollow,
And pale the star-lights follow.

Before 1882.

TOUCHING 'NEVER'

BECAUSE you never yet have loved me, dear,
Think you you never can nor ever will?
Surely while life remains hope lingers still,
Hope the last blossom of life's dying year.
Because the season and mine age grow sere,
Shall never Spring bring forth her daffodil,
Shall never sweeter Summer feast her fill
Of roses with the nightingales they hear?
If you had loved me, I not loving you,
If you had urged me with the tender plea
Of what our unknown years to come might do
(Eternal years, if Time should count too few),
I would have owned the point you pressed on me
Was possible, or probable, or true.

Before 1882.

BRANDONS BOTH.

OH fair Milly Brandon, a young maid, a fair maid!
All her curls are yellow and her eyes are blue,
And her cheeks were rosy red till a secret care made
Hollow whiteness of their brightness as a care will do.

Still she tends her flowers, but not as in the old days,
Still she sings her songs, but not the songs of old:
If now it be high Summer her days seem brief and cold days,
If now it be high Summer her nights are long and cold.

If you have a secret, keep it, pure maid Milly;
Life is filled with troubles and the world with scorn;
And pity without love is at best times hard and chilly,
Chilling sore and stinging sore a heart forlorn.

Walter Brandon, do you guess Milly Brandon's secret?
Many things you know, but not everything,
With your locks like raven's plumage, and eyes like an egret,
And a laugh that is music, and such a voice to sing.

Nelly Knollys, she is fair, but she is not fairer
Than fairest Milly Brandon was before she turned so pale:
Oh but Nelly's dearer if she be not rarer,
She need not keep a secret or blush behind a veil.

Beyond the first green hills, beyond the nearest valleys,
Nelly dwells at home beneath her mother's eyes:
Her home is neat and homely, not a cot and not a palace,
Just the home where love sets up his happiest memories.

Milly has no mother; and sad beyond another
Is she whose blessed mother is vanished out of call:
Truly comfort beyond comfort is stored up in a mother
Who bears with all, and hopes through all, and loves us all.

Where peacocks nod and flaunt up and down the terrace,
Furling and unfurling their scores of sightless eyes,
To and fro among the leaves and buds and flowers and berries
Maiden Milly strolls and pauses, smiles and sighs.

On the hedged-in terrace of her father's palace
She may stroll and muse alone, may smile or sigh alone,
Letting thoughts and eyes go wandering over hills and valleys
To-day her father's, and one day to be all her own.

If her thoughts go coursing down lowlands and up highlands,
It is because the startled game are leaping from their lair;
If her thoughts dart homeward to the reedy river islands,
It is because the waterfowl rise startled here or there.

At length a footfall on the steps: she turns, composed and steady,
All the long-descended greatness of her father's house
Lifting up her head; and there stands Walter keen and ready
For hunting or for hawking, a flush upon his brows.

'Good-morrow, fair cousin.' 'Good-morrow, fairest cousin:
The sun has started on his course, and I must start to-day:
If you have done me one good turn you've done me many a dozen,
And I shall often think of you, think of you away.'

'Over hill and hollow what quarry will you follow,
Or what fish will you angle for beside the river's edge?
There's cloud upon the hill-top and there's mist deep down the hollow,
And fog among the rushes and the rustling sedge.'

'I shall speed well enough be it hunting or hawking,
Or casting a bait toward the shyest daintiest fin.
But I kiss your hands, my cousin; I must not loiter talking,
For nothing comes of nothing, and I'm fain to seek and win.'.

'Here's a thorny rose: will you wear it an hour,
Till the petals drop apart still fresh and pink and sweet?
Till the petals drop from the drooping perished flower,
And only the graceless thorns are left of it.'

'Nay, I have another rose sprung in another garden,
Another rose which sweetens all the world for me.
Be you a tenderer mistress and be you a warier warden
Of your rose, as sweet as mine, and full as fair to see.'

'Nay, a bud once plucked there is no reviving,
Nor is it worth your wearing now, nor worth indeed my own;
The dead to the dead, and the living to the living.
It's time I go within, for it's time now you were gone.'

'Good-bye, Milly Brandon, I shall not forget you,
Though it be good-bye between us for ever from to-day;
I could almost wish to-day that I had never met you,
And I'm true to you in this one word that I say.'

'Good-bye, Walter. I can guess which thornless rose you covet;
Long may it bloom and prolong its sunny morn:
Yet as for my one thorny rose, I do not cease to love it,
And if it is no more a flower I love it as a thorn.'

Before 1882.

A LIFE'S PARALLELS

NEVER on this side of the grave again,
On this side of the river,
On this side of the garner of the grain,
Never.

Ever while time flows on and on and on,
That narrow noiseless river,
Ever while corn bows heavy-headed, wan,
Ever.

Never despairing, often fainting, rueing,
But looking back, ah never!
Faint yet pursuing, faint yet still pursuing
Ever.

Before 1882.

AT LAST

MANY have sung of love a root of bane:
While to my mind a root of balm it is,
For love at length breeds love; sufficient bliss
For life and death and rising up again.
Surely when light of Heaven makes all things plain,
Love will grow plain with all its mysteries;
Nor shall we need to fetch from over seas
Wisdom or wealth or pleasure safe from pain.
Love in our borders, love within our heart,
Love all in all, we then shall bide at rest,
Ended for ever life's unending quest,
Ended for ever effort, change, and fear:
Love all in all;—no more that better part
Purchased, but at the cost of all things here.

Before 1882.

GOLDEN SILENCES

THERE is silence that saith 'Ah me!'
There is silence that nothing saith;
One the silence of life forlorn,
One the silence of death;
One is, and the other shall be.

One we know and have known for long,
One we know not, but we shall know,
All we who have ever been born;
Even so, be it so,—
There is silence, despite a song.

Sowing day is a silent day,
Resting night is a silent night;
But whoso reaps the ripened corn
Shall shout in his delight,
While silences vanish away.

Before 1882.

IN THE WILLOW SHADE

I SAT beneath a willow tree,
Where water falls and calls;
While fancies upon fancies solaced me,
Some true, and some were false.

Who set their heart upon a hope
That never comes to pass
Droop in the end like fading heliotrope,
The sun's wan looking-glass.

Who set their will upon a whim
Clung to through good and ill
Are wrecked alike whether they sink or swim,
Or hit or miss their will.

All things are vain that wax and wane,
For which we waste our breath;
Love only doth not wane and is not vain,
Love only outlives death.

A singing lark rose toward the sky,
Circling he sang amain;
He sang, a speck scarce visible sky-high,
And then he sank again.

A second like a sunlit spark
Flashed singing up his track;
But never overtook that foremost lark,
And songless fluttered back.

A hovering melody of birds
Haunted the air above;
They clearly sang contentment without words,
And youth and joy and love.

O silvery weeping willow tree
With all leaves shivering,
Have you no purpose but to shadow me
Beside this rippled spring?

On this first fleeting day of Spring,
For Winter is gone by,
And every bird on every quivering wing
Floats in a sunny sky;

On this first Summer-like soft day,
While sunshine steeps the air,
And every cloud has gat itself away,
And birds sing everywhere.

Have you no purpose in the world
But thus to shadow me
With all your tender drooping twigs unfurled,
O weeping willow tree?

With all your tremulous leaves outspread
Betwixt me and the sun,
While here I loiter on a mossy bed
With half my work undone;

My work undone, that should be done
At once with all my might;
For after the long day and lingering sun
Comes the unworking night.

This day is lapsing on its way,
Is lapsing out of sight;
And after all the chances of the day
Comes the resourceless night.

The weeping willow shook its head
And stretched its shadow long;
The west grew crimson, the sun smouldered red,
The birds forbore a song.

Slow wind sighed through the willow leaves,
The ripple made a moan,
The world drooped murmuring like a thing that grieves;
And then I felt alone.

I rose to go, and felt the chill,
And shivered as I went;
Yet shivering wondered, and I wonder still,
What more that willow meant;
That silvery weeping willow tree
With all leaves shivering,
Which spent one long day overshadowing me
Beside a spring in Spring.

Before 1882.

FLUTTERED WINGS

THE splendour of the kindling day,
The splendour of the setting sun,
These move my soul to wend its way,
And have done
With all we grasp and toil amongst and say.

The paling roses of a cloud,
The fading bow that arches space,
These woo my fancy toward my shroud;
Toward the place
Of faces veiled, and heads discrowned and bowed.

The nation of the steadfast stars,
The wandering star whose blaze is brief,
These make me beat against the bars
Of my grief;
My tedious grief, twin to the life it mars.

O fretted heart tossed to and fro,
So fain to flee, so fain to rest!
All glories that are high or low,
East or west,
Grow dim to thee who art so fain to go.

Before 1882.

A FISHER-WIFE

THE soonest mended, nothing said;
And help may rise from east or west,
But my two hands are lumps of lead,
My heart sits leaden in my breast.

O north wind, swoop not from the north,
O south wind, linger in the south,
Oh come not raving raging forth,
To bring my heart into my mouth;

For I've a husband out at sea,
Afloat on feeble planks of wood;
He does not know what fear may be;
I would have told him if I could.

I would have locked him in my arms,
I would have hid him in my heart;
For oh the waves are fraught with harms,
And he and I so far apart!

Before 1882.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

WHY has Spring one syllable less
Than any its fellow season?
There may be some other reason,
And I'm merely making a guess;
But surely it hoards such wealth
Of happiness, hope, and health,
Sunshine and musical sound,
It may spare a foot from its name,
Yet all the same
Superabound.

Soft-named Summer,
Most welcome comer,
Brings almost everything
Over which we dream or sing
Or sigh;
But then Summer wends its way,
To-morrow,—to-day,—
Good-bye!

Autumn,—the slow name lingers,
While we likewise flag;
It silences many singers;
Its slow days drag,
Yet hasten at speed
To leave us in chilly need
For Winter to strip indeed.

In all-lack Winter,
Dull of sense and of sound,
We huddle and shiver
Beside our splinter
Of crackling pine,
Snow in sky and snow on ground.
Winter and cold
Can't last for ever!
To-day, to-morrow, the sun will shine,
When we are old.
But some still are young,
Singing the song
Which others have sung,
Ringing the bells
Which others have rung,—
Even so!
We ourselves, who else?
We ourselves long
Long ago.

Before 1882.

MARIANA

NOT for me marring or making,
Not for me giving or taking;
I love my Love and he loves not me,
I love my Love and my heart is breaking.

Sweet is Spring in its lovely showing,
Sweet the violet veiled in blowing,
Sweet it is to love and be loved;
Ah sweet knowledge beyond my knowing!

Who sighs for love sighs but for pleasure,
Who wastes for love hoards up a treasure;
Sweet to be loved and take no count,
Sweet it is to love without measure.

Sweet my Love whom I loved to try for,
Sweet my Love whom I love and sigh for,
Will you once love me and sigh for me,
You my Love whom I love and die for?

Before 1882.

MEMENTO MORI

POOR the pleasure
Doled out by measure,
Sweet though it be, while brief
As falling of the leaf;
Poor is pleasure
By weight and measure.

Sweet the sorrow
Which ends to-morrow;
Sharp though it be and sore,
It ends for evermore:
Zest of sorrow,
What ends to-morrow.

Before 1882.

ONE FOOT ON SEA, AND ONE ON SHORE

'OH tell me once and tell me twice
And tell me thrice to make it plain,
When we who part this weary day,
When we who part shall meet again.'

'When windflowers blossom on the sea
And fishes skim along the plain,
Then we who part this weary day,
Then you and I shall meet again.'

'Yet tell me once before we part,
Why need we part who part in pain?
If flowers must blossom on the sea,
Why, we shall never meet again.

'My cheeks are paler than a rose,
My tears are salter than the main,
My heart is like a lump of ice
If we must never meet again.'

'Oh weep or laugh, but let me be,
And live or die, for all's in vain;
For life's in vain since we must part,
And parting must not meet again

'Till windflowers blossom on the sea
And fishes skim along the plain;
Pale rose of roses, let me be,—
Your breaking heart breaks mine again.'

Before 1882.

A SONG OF FLIGHT

WHILE we slumber and sleep
The sun leaps up from the deep—
Daylight born at the leap!—
Rapid, dominant, free,
Athirst to bathe in the uttermost sea.

While we linger at play—
If the year would stand at May!—
Winds are up and away
Over land, over sea,
To their goal wherever their goal may be.

It is time to arise,
To race for the promised prize,—
The Sun flies, the Wind flies—
We are strong, we are free,
And home lies beyond the stars and the sea.

Before 1882.

BUDS AND BABIES

A MILLION buds are born that never blow,
That sweet with promise lift a pretty head
To blush and wither on a barren bed
And leave no fruit to show.

Sweet, unfulfilled. Yet have I understood
One joy, by their fragility made plain:
Nothing was ever beautiful in vain,
Or all in vain was good.

Before 1882.

BOY JOHNNY

'IF you'll busk you as a bride
And make ready,
It's I will wed you with a ring,
O fair lady.'

'Shall I busk me as a bride,
I so bonny,
For you to wed me with a ring,
O boy Johnny?'

'When you've busked you as a bride
And made ready,
Who else is there to marry you,
O fair lady?'

'I will find my lover out,
I so bonny,
And you shall bear my wedding-train,
O boy Johnny.'

Before 1882.

SUMMER IS ENDED

To think that this meaningless thing
was ever a rose,
Scentless, colourless, *this*!
Will it ever be thus (who knows?)
Thus with our bliss,
If we wait till the close?

Though we care not to wait for the end, there comes the end,
Sooner, later, at last,
Which nothing can mar, nothing mend:
An end locked fast,
Bent we cannot re-bend.

Before 1882.

PASSING AND GLASSING

ALL things that pass
Are woman's looking-glass:
They show her how her bloom must fade,
And she herself be laid
With withered roses in the shade;

With withered roses and the fallen peach,
Unlovely, out of reach
Of summer joy that was.

All things that pass
Are woman's tiring-glass;
The faded lavender is sweet,
Sweet the dead violet
Culled and laid by and cared for yet;
The dried-up violets and dried lavender,
Still sweet, may comfort her,
Nor need she cry Alas!

All things that pass
Are wisdom's looking-glass;
Being full of hope and fear, and still
Brimfull of good or ill,
According to our work and will;
For there is nothing new beneath the sun;
Our doings have been done,
And that which shall be was.

Before 1882.

SŒUR LOUISE DE LA MISÉRICORDE

(1674)

I HAVE desired, and I have been desired:
But now the days are over of desire,
Now dust and dying embers mock my fire:
Where is the hire for which my life was hired?
Oh vanity of vanities, desire!

Longing and love, pangs of a perished pleasure,
Longing and love, a disenkindled fire,
And memory a bottomless gulf of mire,
And love a fount of tears outrunning measure:
Oh vanity of vanities, desire!

Now from my heart, love's deathbed, trickles, trickles,
Drop by drop slowly, drop by drop of fire,
The dross of life, of love, of spent desire:
Alas my rose of life gone all to prickles!
Oh vanity of vanities, desire!

Oh vanity of vanities, desire!
Stunting my hope which might have strained up higher,
Turning my garden-plot to barren mire;
Oh death-struck love, oh disenkindled fire,
Oh vanity of vanities, desire!

Before 1882.

PASTIME

A BOAT amid the ripples, drifting, rocking;
Two idle people, without pause or aim;
While in the ominous West there gathers darkness
Flushed with flame.

A hay-cock in a hay-field, backing, lapping;
Two drowsy people pillowed roundabout;
While in the ominous West across the darkness
Flame leaps out.

Better a wrecked life than a life so
aimless,
Better a wrecked life than a life so
soft:
The ominous West glooms thunder-
ing, with its fire
Lit aloft.

Before 1882.

BIRCHINGTON CHURCH-YARD

A LOWLY hill which overlooks a flat,
Half sea, half country side;
A flat-shored sea of low-voiced
creeping tide
Over a chalky weedy mat.

A hill of hillocks, flowery and kept
green
Round Crosses raised for hope,
With many-tinted sunsets where
the slope
Faces the lingering western sheen.

A lowly hope, a height that is but
low,
While Time sets solemnly,
While the tide rises of Eternity,
Silent and neither swift nor slow.

April 1882.

RESURGAM

FROM depth to height, from height
to loftier height,
The climber sets his foot and sets
his face,
Tracks lingering sunbeams to
their halting-place,
And counts the last pulsations of the
light.

Strenuous thro' day and unsurprised
by night
He runs a race with Time and
wins the race,
Emptied and stripped of all save
only Grace,
Will, Love, a threefold panoply of
might.
Darkness descends for light he
toiled to seek:
He stumbles on the darkened
mountain-head,
Left breathless in the unbreath-
able thin air,
Made freeman of the living and
the dead:—
He wots not he has topped the top-
most peak,
But the returning sun will find
him there.

Before 1883.

MICHAEL F. M. ROSSETTI

Born 22 April 1881; Died 24 January
1883.

1

A HOLY Innocent gone home
Without so much as one sharp
wounding word;
A blessed Michael in heaven's lofty
dome
Without a sword.

2

Brief dawn and noon and setting
time!
Our rapid-rounding moon has
fled;
A black eclipse before the prime
Has swallowed up that shining
head.

Eternity holds up her looking-glass :—
The eclipse of Time will pass,
And all that lovely light return to sight.

3

I watch the showers and think of flowers :
Alas my flower that shows no fruit!
My snowdrop plucked, my daisy shoot
Plucked from the root.
Soon Spring will shower, the world will flower,
A world of buds will promise fruit,
Pear-trees will shoot and apples shoot
Sound at the root.
Bud of an hour, far off you flower ;
My bud, far off you ripen fruit ;
My prettiest bud, my straightest shoot,
Sweet at the root.

4

The youngest bud of five,
The least lamb of the fold,
Bud not to blossom, yet to thrive
Away from cold :
Lamb which we shall not see
Leap at its pretty pranks,
Our lamb at rest and full of glee
On heavenly banks.

January 1883.

A WINTRY SONNET

A ROBIN said : 'The Spring will never come,
And I shall never care to build again.'
A Rosebush said : 'These frosts are wearisome,
My sap will never stir for sun or rain.'
The half Moon said : 'These nights are fogged and slow,
I neither care to wax nor care to wane.'
The Ocean said : 'I thirst from long ago,
Because earth's rivers cannot fill the main.—'
When Springtime came, red Robin built a nest,
And trilled a lover's song in sheer delight.
Grey hoarfrost vanished, and the Rose with might
Clothed her in leaves and buds of crimson core.
The dim Moon brightened. Ocean sunned his crest,
Dimpled his blue, yet thirsted evermore.

Before 1884.

ONE SEA-SIDE GRAVE

UNMINDFUL of the roses,
Unmindful of the thorn,
A reaper tired reposes
Among his gathered corn :
So might I, till the morn!

Cold as the cold Decembers,
Past as the days that set,
While only one remembers
And all the rest forget,—
But one remembers yet.

Spring 1884.

WHO SHALL SAY?

I TOILED on, but thou
Wast weary of the way,
And so we parted: now
Who shall say
Which is happier—I or thou?

I am weary now
On the solitary way:
But art thou rested, thou?
Who shall say
Which of us is calmer now?

Still my heart's love, thou,
In thy secret way,
Art still remembered now:
Who shall say—
Still rememberest thou?

Circa 1884.

ONE SWALLOW DOES NOT MAKE A SUMMER

A ROSE which spied one Swallow
Made haste to blush and blow;
'Others are sure to follow':
Ah no, not so!
The wandering clouds still owe
A few fresh flakes of snow,
Chill fog must fill the hollow,
Before the bird-stream flow
In flood across the main,
And Winter's woe
End in glad Summer come again.
Then thousand flowers may blossom
by the shore,—
But that Rose never more.

Before 1886.

A FROG'S FATE

CONTEMPTUOUS of his home beyond
The village and the village-pond,
A large-souled Frog who spurned each byeway
Hopped along the imperial highway.

Nor grunting pig nor barking dog
Could disconcert so great a Frog.
The morning dew was lingering yet,
His sides to cool, his tongue to wet:
The night-dew, when the night should come,
A travelled Frog would send him home.

Not so, alas! The wayside grass
Sees him no more: not so, alas!
A broad-wheeled waggon unawares
Ran him down, his joys, his cares.
From dying choke one feeble croak
The Frog's perpetual silence broke:—
'Ye buoyant Frogs, ye great and small,
Even I am mortal after all!
My road to fame turns out a wry way;
I perish on the hideous highway:
Oh for my old familiar byeway!'

The choking Frog sobbed and was gone;
The Waggoner strode whistling on.
Unconscious of the carnage done.
Whistling that Waggoner strode on—
Whistling (it may have happened so)
'A froggy would a-wooing go.'
A hypothetic frog trolled he,
Obtuse to a reality.

O rich and poor, O great and small,
Such oversights beset us all.
The mangled Frog abides incog,
The uninteresting actual frog :
The hypothetic frog alone
Is the one frog we dwell upon.
Before 1886.

'THERE IS A BUDDING MORROW IN MIDNIGHT'

WINTRY boughs against a wintry sky ;
Yet the sky is partly blue
And the clouds are partly bright :—
Who can tell but sap is mounting high
Out of sight,
Ready to burst through ?

Winter is the mother-nurse of Spring,
Lovely for her daughter's sake,
Not unlovely for her own :
For a future buds in everything ;
Grown, or blown,
Or about to break.
Before 1890.

THE WAY OF THE WORLD

A BOAT that sails upon the sea,
Sails far and far and far away :
Who sail in her sing songs of glee,
Or watch and pray.

A boat that drifts upon the sea,
Silent and void to sun and air :
Who sailed in her have ended glee
And watch and prayer.
Circa 1890.

A HELPMEET FOR HIM

WOMAN was made for man's delight ;
Charm, O woman, be not afraid !
His shadow by day, his moon by night,
Woman was made.

Her strength with weakness is overlaid ;
Meek compliances veil her might ;
Him she stays by whom she is stayed.

World-wide champion of truth and right,
Hope in gloom and in danger aid,
Tender and faithful, ruddy and white,
Woman was made.
Before 1891.

EXULTATE DEO

MANY a flower hath perfume for its dower,
And many a bird a song,
And harmless lambs milkwhite beside their dams
Frolic along ;
Perfume and song and whiteness offering praise
In humble peaceful ways.

Man's high degree hath will and memory,
Affection and desire,
By loftier ways he mounts of prayer and praise ;
Fire unto fire,
Deep unto deep responsive, height to height,
Until he walk in white.
Before 1891.

BROTHER BRUIN

A DANCING Bear grotesque and funny
Earned for his master heaps of money,
Gruff yet good-natured, fond of honey,
And cheerful if the day was sunny.
Past hedge and ditch, past pond and wood,
He tramped, and on some common stood;
There cottage children circling gaily,
He in their midmost footed daily.
Pandean pipes and drum and muzzle
Were quite enough his brain to puzzle:
But like a philosophic bear
He let alone extraneous care
And danced contented anywhere.

Still, year on year, and wear and tear,
Age even the gruffest bluffest bear.
A day came when he scarce could prance,
And when his master looked askance
On dancing Bear who would not dance.
To looks succeeded blows; hard blows
Battered his ears and poor old nose.
From bluff and gruff he waxed curmudgeon;
He danced indeed, but danced in dudgeon,
Capered in fury fast and faster:—
Ah could he once but hug his master
And perish in one joint disaster!
But deafness, blindness, weakness growing,
Not fury's self could keep him going.
One dark day when the snow was snowing
His cup was brimmed to overflowing:
He tottered, toppled on one side,
Growled once, and shook his head, and died.
The master kicked and struck in vain;
The weary drudge had distanced pain,
And never now would wince again.
The master growled: he might have howled
Or coaxed—that slave's last growl was growled.
So gnawed by rancour and chagrin
One thing remained: he sold the skin.

What next the man did is not worth
Your notice or my setting forth,
But hearken what befell at last.
His idle working days gone past,
And not one friend and not one penny
Stored up (if ever he had any
Friends, but his coppers had been many),
All doors stood shut against him, but
The workhouse door which cannot shut.
There he droned on—a grim old sinner,
Toothless and grumbling for his dinner,
Unpitied quite, uncared for much
(The ratepayers not favouring such),
Hungry and gaunt, with time to spare.
Perhaps the hungry gaunt old Bear
Danced back, a haunting memory.
Indeed I hope so: for you see
If once the hard old heart relented
The hard old man may have repented.

Before 1892.

TO MY FIOR-DI-LISA

THE Rose is Love's own flower, and Love's no less
The Lily's tenderness.
Then half their dignity must Roses yield
To Lilies of the field?
Nay, diverse notes make up true harmony;
All-fashioned loves agree:
Love wears the Lily's whiteness, and Love glows
In the deep-hearted Rose.

1892.

TO-MORROW

PASSING away the bliss,
The anguish passing away:
Thus it is
To-day.

Clean past away the sorrow,
The pleasure brought back to stay:
Thus and this
To-morrow.

Before 1893.

SLEEPING AT LAST

SLEEPING at last, the trouble and tumult over,
Sleeping at last, the struggle and horror past,
Cold and white, out of sight of friend and of lover,
Sleeping at last.

No more a tired heart downcast or overcast,
No more pangs that wring or shifting fears that hover,
Sleeping at last in a dreamless sleep locked fast.

Fast asleep. Singing birds in their leafy cover
Cannot wake her, nor shake her the gusty blast.
Under the purple thyme and the purple clover
Sleeping at last.

Circa 1893.

POEMS FOR CHILDREN AND MINOR VERSE

SONNETS

WRITTEN TO BOUTS-RIMÉS

I

AMID the shades of a deserted hall
I stand and think on much that hath been lost.
How long it is since other step has crost
This time-worn floor! This tapestry is all
Worm-eaten; and these columns rise up tall
Yet crumbling to decay; where banners tost
Thin spiders' webs hang now; the bitter frost
Has even killed the flowers upon the wall.

Yet once this was a home brimfull of life,
Full of the hopes and fears and love of youth,
Full of love's language speaking without sound :
Here honour was enshrined and kindly truth ;
Hither the young lord brought his blushing wife,
And here the bridal garlands were unbound.

II

I SIT among green shady valleys oft,
Listening to echo-winds sighing of woe ;
The grass and flowers are strong and sweet below ;
Yea I am tired, and the smooth turf is soft.
I sit and think, and never look aloft,
Save to the tops of a tall poplar-row
That glisten in the wind, whispering low
Of sudden sorrow reaching those who laught.
A very drowsy fountain bubbles near,
Catching pale sunbeams o'er it wandering ;
Its waters are so clear the stones look through :
Then, sitting by its lazy stream, I hear
Silence more loud than any other thing,
What time the trees weep o'er me honey-dew.

III

WOULDST thou give me a heavy jewelled crown
And purple mantle and embroidered vest ?
Dear Child, the colours of the glorious West
Are far more gorgeous when the sun sinks down.
The diadem would only make me frown
With its own weight ; nay give me for my crest
Pale violets dreaming in perfect rest,
Or rather leaves withered to autumn brown.
A purple flowing mantle would but hinder
My careless walk, and an embroidered robe
Would shame me. What is the best man who stept
On earth more than the naked worm that crept
Over its surface ? Earth shall be a cinder ;
Where shall be then the beauty of the globe ?

IV

I SAID within myself : 'I am a fool
To sigh ever for that which being gone
Cannot return : the sun shines as it shone ;
Rejoice.'—But who can be made glad by rule ?
My heart and soul and spirit are no tool
To play with and direct ; my cheek is wan

With memory; and ever and anon
I weep, feeling life is a weary school.
There is much noise and bustle in
the street;
It used to be so, and it is so now;
All are the same, and will be
many a year.
Spirit that canst not break and
wilt not bow,
Fear not the cold, thou who hast
borne the heat;—
Die if thou wilt, but what hast
thou to fear?

V

I SOUGHT among the living, and I
seek
Among the dead, for some to
love; but few
I found at last, and those had
quite run through
Their store of love; and friendship
is too weak,
Too cold for me; yet will I never
speak,
Telling my heart-want to smooth
listeners who
Would wonder smiling; I can
bear and do—
Hot shame shall dry no tears upon
my cheek.
So, when my dust shall mix with
other dust,
When I shall have found quiet in
decay,
And lie at ease and cease like
a mere thought,—
Those whom I loved, thinking
on me, shall not
Grieve with a measure, saying, 'Now
we must
Weep for a little ere we laugh
to-day.'

VI

AH welladay and wherefore am I
here?
I sit alone all day, I sit and think—
I watch the sun arise, I watch it
sink,
And feel no soul-light, though the
day is clear.
Surely it is a folly, it is mere
Madness, to stand for ever on the
brink
Of dark despair, and yet not break
the link
That makes me scorned who cannot
be held dear.
I will have done with it; I will not
stand
And fear on without hope, and
tremble thus,
Look for the break of day and
miss it ever.
Although my heart be broken,
they shall never
Say, 'She was glad to sojourn
among us,
Thankful if one would take her by
the hand.'

VII

AND is this August weather? Nay,
not so.
With the long rain the cornfield
waxeth dark.
How the cold rain comes pouring
down! and hark
To the chill wind whose measured
pace and slow
Seems still to linger, being loth to go.
I cannot stand beside the sea and
mark
Its grandeur—it's too wet for that:
no lark

In this drear season cares to sing or
show.
And, since its name is August, all
men find
Fire not allowable; winter foregone
Had more of sunlight and of
glad warmth more.
I shall be fain to run upon the
shore
And mark the rain. Hath the
sun ever shone?
Cheer up! there can be nothing
worse to mind.

VIII

METHINKS the ills of life I fain
would shun;
But then I must shun life, which
is a blank.
Even in my childhood oft my
spirit sank,
Thinking of all that had still to be
done.
Among my many friends there is
not one
Like her with whom I sat upon
the bank
Willow-o'ershadowed, from whose
lips I drank
A love more pure than streams that
sing and run.
But many times that joy has cost a
sigh;
And many times I in my heart
have sought
For the old comfort and not
found it yet.
Surely in that calm day when I
shall die
The painful thought will be a
blessed thought,
And I shall sorrow that I must
forget.

IX—THE PLAGUE

'LISTEN, the last stroke of death's
noon has struck—
The plague is come,' a gnashing
Madman said,
And laid him down straightway
upon his bed.
His writhèd hands did at the linen
pluck;
Then all is over. With a careless
chuck
Among his fellows he is cast. How
sped
His spirit matters little: many
dead
Make men hard-hearted. — 'Place
him on the truck.
Go forth into the burial-ground and
find
Room at so much a pitful for so
many.
One thing is to be done; one
thing is clear:
Keep thou back from the hot un-
wholesome wind,
That it infect not thee.' Say, is
there any
Who mourneth for the multi-
tude dead here?

August 1848.

X*a*

WOULD that I were a turnip white,
Or raven black,
Or miserable hack
Dragging a cab from left to
right;
Or would I were the showman of a
sight,
Or weary donkey with a laden
back,
Or racer in a sack,

Or freezing traveller on an Alpine
height;
Or would I were straw-catching as
I drown
(A wretched landsman I who cannot
swim),
Or watching a lone vessel sink,—
Rather than writing: I would change
my pink
Gauze for a hideous yellow satin
gown
With deep-cut scolloped edges and
a rim.

x*b*

I FANCY the good fairies dressed in
white,
Glancing like moonbeams through
the shadows black,
Without much work to do for king
or hack.
Training perhaps some twisted
branch aright;
Or sweeping faded autumn-leaves
from sight
To foster embryo life; or binding
back
Stray tendrils; or in ample bean-
pod sack
Bringing wild honey from the rocky
height;
Or fishing for a fly lest it should
drown;
Or teaching water-lily heads to
swim,
Fearful that sudden rain might
make them sink;
Or dyeing the pale rose a
warmer pink;
Or wrapping lilies in their leafy
gown,
Yet letting the white peep beyond
the rim.

x*c*—VANITY FAIR

SOME ladies dress in muslin full and
white,
Some gentlemen in cloth succinct
and black;
Some patronize a dog-cart, some
a hack,
Some think a painted clarence only
right.
Youth is not always such a pleasing
sight,
Witness a man with tassels on
his back;
Or woman in a great-coat like a
sack
Towering above her sex with horrid
height.
If all the world were water fit to
drown,
There are some whom you would
not teach to swim,
Rather enjoying if you saw
them sink;
Certain old ladies dressed in
girlish pink,
With roses and geraniums on their
gown:
Go to the Bason, poke them o'er
the rim.

Circa 1848.

TO LALLA

READING MY VERSES TOPSY-TURVY

DARLING little Cousin,
With your thoughtful look
Reading topsy-turvy
From a printed book

English hieroglyphics,
More mysterious
To you than Egyptian
Ones would be to us;—

Leave off for a minute
Studying, and say
What is the impression
That those marks convey.

Only solemn silence
And a wondering smile:
But your eyes are lifted
Unto mine the while.

In their gaze so steady
I can surely trace
That a happy spirit
Lighteth up your face;

Tender happy spirit,
Innocent and pure,
Teaching more than science,
And than learning more.

How should I give answer
To that asking look?
Darling little Cousin,
Go back to your book.

Read on: if you knew it,
You have cause to boast:
You are much the wiser
Though I know the most.

24 January 1849.

TWO ENIGMAS

I

NAME any gentleman you spy,
And there's a chance that he is I.
Go out to angle, and you may
Catch me on a propitious day.
Booted and spurred, their journey ended,
The weary are by me befriended.
If roasted meat should be your wish,
I am more needful than a dish.
I am acknowledgedly poor;
Yet my resources are no fewer
Than all the trades—there is not one
But I profess, beneath the sun.
I bear a part in many a game;
My worth may change, I am the same:
Sometimes, by you expelled, I roam
Forth from the sanctuary of home.

2

Me you often meet
In London's crowded street,
And merry children's voices my resting-place proclaim.
Pictures and prose and verse
Compose me—I rehearse
Evil and good and folly, and call each by its name.
I make men glad, and I
Can bid their senses fly,
And festive echoes know me of Isis and of Cam.
But give me to a friend,
And amity will end,
Though he may have the temper and meekness of a lamb.

Spring 1849.

TWO CHARADES

I

MY first is no proof of my second,
Though my second's a proof of my first.
If I were my whole, I should tell you
Quite freely my best and my worst.

One clue more:—If you fail to discover
My meaning, you're blind as a mole;
But, if you will frankly confess it,
You show yourself clearly my whole.

2

How many authors are my first!
And I shall be so too
Unless I finish speedily
That which I have to do.

My second is a lofty tree
And a delicious fruit;
This in the hot-house flourishes—
That amid rocks takes root.

My whole is an immortal queen
Renowned in classic lore:
Her a god won without her will,
And her a goddess bore.

Spring 1849.

A BOUTS-RIMÉS SONNET

So I grew half delirious and quite sick,
And through the darkness saw strange faces grin
Of monsters at me. One put forth a fin,
And touched me clammily. I could not pick
A quarrel with it: it began to lick
My hand, making meanwhile a piteous din,
And shedding human tears: it would begin
To near me, then retreat. I heard the quick
Pulsation of my heart, I marked the fight
Of life and death within me. Then sleep threw
Her veil around me; but this thing is true.
When I awoke the sun was at his height;
And I wept sadly, knowing that one new
Creature had love for me, and others spite.

24 *September* 1849.

PORTRAITS

An easy lazy length of limb,
Dark eyes and features from the South,
A short-legged meditative pipe
Set in a supercilious mouth:
Ink and a pen and papers laid
Down on a table for the night,
Beside a semi-dozing man
Who wakes to go to bed by light.

. . . . .

A pair of brothers brotherly,
Unlike and yet how much the same
In heart and high-toned intellect,
In face and bearing, hope and aim:
Friends of the selfsame treasured friends
And of one home the dear delight,
Beloved of many a loving heart,
And cherished both in mine,
Good-night.

9 *May* 1853.

CHARON

In my cottage near the Styx
Co. and Charon still combine
Us to ferry o'er like bricks
In a boat of chaste design.
Cerberus, thou triple fair,
Distance doth thy charms impair:

Let the passage give to us
Charon, Co., and Cerberus.

CHORUS

Now the passage gives us to
Charon, Cerberus, and Co.

June 1853—Frome Selwood.

THE P.R.B.

1

THE two Rossettis (brothers they)
And Holman Hunt and John Millais,
With Stephens chivalrous and bland,
And Woolner in a distant land—
In these six men I awestruck see
Embodied the great P.R.B.
D. G. Rossetti offered two
Good pictures to the public view;
Unnumbered ones great John Millais,
And Holman more than I can say.

William Rossetti, calm and solemn,
Cuts up his brethren by the column.

19 *September* 1853.

2

THE P.R.B. is in its decadence:
For Woolner in Australia cooks his chops,
And Hunt is yearning for the land of Cheops;
D. G. Rossetti shuns the vulgar optic;
While William M. Rossetti merely lops
His B's in English disesteemed as Coptic;
Calm Stephens in the twilight smokes his pipe,
But long the dawning of his public day;
And he at last the champion great Millais,
Attaining academic opulence,
Winds up his signature with A.R.A.
So rivers merge in the perpetual sea;
So luscious fruit must fall when overripe;
And so the consummated P.R.B.

10 *November* 1853.

CHILD'S TALK IN APRIL

I WISH you were a pleasant wren,
And I your small accepted mate;
How we'd look down on toilsome men!
We'd rise and go to bed at eight
Or it may be not quite so late.

Then you should see the nest I'd build,
The wondrous nest for you and me;
The outside rough perhaps, but filled
With wool and down; ah you should see
The cosy nest that it would be.

We'd have our change of hope and fear,
Small quarrels, reconcilements sweet:
I'd perch by you to chirp and cheer,
Or hop about on active feet,
And fetch you dainty bits to eat.

We'd be so happy by the day,
So safe and happy through the night,
We both should feel, and I should say,

It's all one season of delight,
And we'll make merry whilst we may.

Perhaps some day there'd be an egg
When spring had blossomed from the snow:
I'd stand triumphant on one leg;
Like chanticleer I'd almost crow
To let our little neighbours know.

Next you should sit and I would sing
Through lengthening days of sunny spring;
Till, if you wearied of the task,
I'd sit; and you should spread your wing
From bough to bough; I'd sit and bask.

Fancy the breaking of the shell,
The chirp, the chickens wet and bare,
The untried proud paternal swell;
And you with housewife-matron air
Enacting choicer bills of fare.

Fancy the embryo coats of down,
The gradual feathers soft and sleek;
Till clothed and strong from tail to crown,
With virgin warblings in their beak,
They too go forth to soar and seek.

So would it last an April through
And early summer fresh with dew,—
Then should we part and live as twain:
Love-time would bring me back to you,
And build our happy nest again.

8 *March* 1855.

WINTER

SWEET blackbird is silenced with chaffinch and thrush,
Only waistcoated robin still chirps in the bush:
Soft sun-loving swallows have mustered in force,
And winged to the spice-teeming southlands their course.

Plump housekeeper dormouse has tucked himself neat,
Just a brown ball in moss with a morsel to eat:
Armed hedgehog has huddled him into the hedge,
While frogs scarce miss freezing deep down in the sedge.

Soft swallows have left us alone in the lurch,
But robin sits whistling to us from his perch:
If I were red robin, I'd pipe you a tune
Would make you despise all the beauties of June.

But, since that cannot be, let us draw round the fire,
Munch chesnuts, tell stories, and stir the blaze higher:
We'll comfort pinched robin with crumbs, little man,
Till he sings us the very best song that he can.

28 *November* 1856.

LOVE'S NAME

LOVE hath a name of Death:
He gives a breath

And takes away.
Lo we, beneath his sway,
Grow like a flower;
To bloom an hour,
To droop a day,
And fade away.

Circa 1869.

GOLDEN HOLLY

COMMON Holly bears a berry
To make Christmas Robins merry:—
Golden Holly bears a rose,
Unfolding at October's close
To cheer an old Friend's eyes and nose.

Circa 1872.

SING-SONG

A NURSERY RHYME BOOK

[N.B.—*The date of Sing-song as a whole is 'Before 1873': but a few of the compositions were written and inserted at a much later date. Those few are marked 'Before 1894.'*]

RHYMES DEDICATED
WITHOUT PERMISSION
TO THE BABY
WHO SUGGESTED THEM

ANGELS at the foot,
And Angels at the head,
And like a curly little lamb
My pretty babe in bed.

LOVE me,—I love you,
Love me, my baby;
Sing it high, sing it low,
Sing it as may be.

Mother's arms under you,
Her eyes above you;
Sing it high, sing it low,
Love me,—I love you.

MY baby has a father and a mother
Rich little baby!
Fatherless, motherless, I know another
Forlorn as may be:
Poor little baby!

OUR little baby fell asleep,
And may not wake again
For days and days, and weeks and weeks;
But then he'll wake again,
And come with his own pretty look
And kiss Mamma again.

'KOOKOOROOKOO! kookoorookoo!
Crows the cock before the morn
'Kikirikee! kikirikee!'
Roses in the east are born.

'Kookoorookoo! kookoorookoo!'
Early birds begin their singing;
'Kikirikee! kikirikee!'
The day, the day, the day is springing.

BABY cry—
Oh fie!—
At the physic in the cup:
Gulp it twice
And gulp it thrice,
Baby gulp it up.

EIGHT o'clock;
The postman's knock!
Five letters for Papa;

One for Lou,
And none for you,
And three for dear Mamma.

BREAD and milk for breakfast,
And woollen frocks to wear,
And a crumb for robin redbreast
On the cold days of the year.

THERE'S snow on the fields,
And cold in the cottage,
While I sit in the chimney nook
Supping hot pottage.

My clothes are soft and warm,
Fold upon fold,
But I'm so sorry for the poor
Out in the cold.

DEAD in the cold, a song-singing thrush,
Dead at the foot of a snowberry bush,—
Weave him a coffin of rush,
Dig him a grave where the soft mosses grow,
Raise him a tombstone of snow.

I DUG and dug amongst the snow,
And thought the flowers would never grow;
I dug and dug amongst the sand,
And still no green thing came to hand.

Melt, O snow! the warm winds blow
To thaw the flowers and melt the snow;
But all the winds from every land
Will rear no blossom from the sand.

A CITY plum is not a plum;
A dumb-bell is no bell, though dumb;
A party rat is not a rat;
A sailor's cat is not a cat;
A soldier's frog is not a frog;
A captain's log is not a log.

YOUR brother has a falcon,
Your sister has a flower;
But what is left for mannikin,
Born within an hour?

I'll nurse you on my knee, my knee,
My own little son;
I'll rock you, rock you, in my arms,
My least little one.

HEAR what the mournful linnets say:
'We built our nest compact and warm,
But cruel boys came round our way
And took our summerhouse by storm.

'They crushed the eggs so neatly laid;
So now we sit with drooping wing,
And watch the ruin they have made,
Too late to build, too sad to sing.'

A BABY'S cradle with no baby in it,
A baby's grave where autumn leaves drop sere;
The sweet soul gathered home to Paradise,
The body waiting here.

HOP-O'-MY-THUMB and little Jack Horner,
What do you mean by tearing and fighting?
Sturdy dog Trot close round the corner,
I never caught him growling and biting.

HOPE is like a harebell trembling from its birth,
Love is like a rose the joy of all the earth;
Faith is like a lily lifted high and white,
Love is like a lovely rose the world's delight;
Harebells and sweet lilies show a thornless growth,
But the rose with all its thorns excels them both.

O WIND, why do you never rest,
Wandering, whistling to and fro,
Bringing rain out of the west,
From the dim north bringing snow?

CRYING, my little one, footsore and weary?
Fall asleep, pretty one, warm on my shoulder:
I must tramp on through the winter night dreary,
While the snow falls on me colder and colder.

You are my one, and I have not another;
Sleep soft, my darling, my trouble and treasure;
Sleep warm and soft in the arms of your mother,
Dreaming of pretty things, dreaming of pleasure.

GROWING in the vale
By the uplands hilly,
Growing straight and frail,
Lady Daffadowndilly.

In a golden crown,
And a scant green gown
While the spring blows chilly,
Lady Daffadown,
Sweet Daffadowndilly.

A LINNET in a gilded cage,—
A linnet on a bough,—
In frosty winter one might doubt
Which bird is luckier now.

But let the trees burst out in leaf,
And nests be on the bough,—
Which linnet is the luckier bird,
Oh who could doubt it now?

WRENS and robins in the hedge,
Wrens and robins here and there;
Building, perching, pecking, fluttering,
Everywhere!

MY baby has a mottled fist,
My baby has a neck in creases;
My baby kisses and is kissed,
For he's the very thing for kisses.

WHY did baby die,
Making Father sigh,
Mother cry?

Flowers, that bloom to die,
Make no reply
Of 'why?'
But bow and die.

If all were rain and never sun,
No bow could span the hill;
If all were sun and never rain,
There'd be no rainbow still.

O wind, where have you been,
That you blow so sweet?
Among the violets
Which blossom at your feet.

The honeysuckle waits
For Summer and for heat;
But violets in the chilly Spring
Make the turf so sweet.

Brownie, Brownie, let down your milk,
White as swansdown and smooth as silk,
Fresh as dew and pure as snow:
For I know where the cowslips blow,
And you shall have a cowslip wreath
No sweeter scented than your breath.

Before 1894.

On the grassy banks
Lambkins at their pranks;
Woolly sisters, woolly brothers,
Jumping off their feet,
While their woolly mothers
Watch by them and bleat.

Rushes in a watery place,
And reeds in a hollow;
A soaring skylark in the sky,
A darting swallow;
And where pale blossom used to hang
Ripe fruit to follow.

Minnie and Mattie
And fat little May,
Out in the country,
Spending a day.

Such a bright day,
With the sun glowing,
And the trees half in leaf,
And the grass growing.

Pinky white pigling
Squeals through his snout,
Woolly white lambkin
Frisks all about.

Cluck! cluck! the nursing hen
Summons her folk,—
Ducklings all downy soft,
Yellow as yolk.

Cluck! cluck! the mother hen
Summons her chickens
To peck the dainty bits
Found in her pickings.

Minnie and Mattie
And May carry posies,
Half of sweet violets,
Half of primroses.

Give the sun time enough,
Glowing and glowing,
He'll rouse the roses
And bring them blowing.

Don't wait for roses
Losing to-day,

O Minnie, Mattie,
And wise little May.

Violets and primroses
Blossom to-day
For Minnie and Mattie
And fat little May.

HEARTSEASE in my garden bed,
With sweetwilliam white and red,
Honeysuckle on my wall :—
Heartsease blossoms in my heart
When sweet William comes to call ;
But it withers when we part,
And the honey-trumpets fall.

'IF I were a Queen,
What would I do?
I'd make you King,
And I'd wait on you.'

'If I were a King,
What would I do?
I'd make you Queen,
For I'd marry you.'

WHAT are heavy? sea-sand and sorrow :
What are brief? to-day and to-morrow :
What are frail? Spring blossoms and youth :
What are deep? the ocean and truth.

STROKE a flint, and there is nothing to admire :
Strike a flint, and forthwith flash out sparks of fire.

Before 1894.

THERE is but one May in the year,
And sometimes May is wet and cold ;
There is but one May in the year
Before the year grows old.

Yet though it be the chilliest May,
With least of sun and most of showers,
Its wind and dew, its night and day,
Bring up the flowers.

THE summer nights are short
Where northern days are long :
For hours and hours lark after lark
Trills out his song.

The summer days are short
Where southern nights are long :
Yet short the night when nightingales
Trill out their song.

THE days are clear,
Day after day,
When April's here,
That leads to May,
And June
Must follow soon :
Stay, June, stay!—
If only we could stop the moon
And June!

'TWIST me a crown of wind-flowers ;
That I may fly away
To hear the singers at their songs,
And players at their play.'

'Put on your crown of wind-flowers :
But whither would you go?'
'Beyond the surging of the sea
And the storms that blow.'

'Alas! your crown of wind-flowers
Can never make you fly:
I twist them in a crown to-day,
And to-night they die.'

BROWN and furry
Caterpillar in a hurry
Take your walk
To the shady leaf, or stalk,
Or what not,
Which may be the chosen spot.
No toad spy you,
Hovering bird of prey pass by you;
Spin and die,
To live again a butterfly.

A TOADSTOOL comes up in a night,—
Learn the lesson, little folk:—
An oak grows on a hundred years,
But then it is an oak.

A POCKET handkerchief to hem—
Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear!
How many stitches it will take
Before it's done, I fear.

Yet set a stitch and then a stitch,
And stitch and stitch away,
Till stitch by stitch the hem is done—
And after work is play!

IF a pig wore a wig,
What could we say?
Treat him as a gentleman,
And say 'Good-day.'

If his tail chanced to fail,
What could we do?—
Send him to the tailoress
To get one new.

SELDOM 'can't,'
Seldom 'don't';
Never 'shan't,'
Never 'won't.'

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1 and 1 are 2—
That's for me and you.

2 and 2 are 4—
That's a couple more.

3 and 3 are 6
Barley-sugar sticks.

4 and 4 are 8
Tumblers at the gate.

5 and 5 are 10
Bluff seafaring men.

6 and 6 are 12
Garden lads who delve.

7 and 7 are 14
Young men bent on sporting.

8 and 8 are 16
Pills the doctor's mixing.

9 and 9 are 18
Passengers kept waiting.

10 and 10 are 20
Roses—pleasant plenty!

11 and 11 are 22
Sums for brother George to do.

12 and 12 are 24
Pretty pictures, and no more.

HOW many seconds in a minute?
Sixty, and no more in it.

How many minutes in an hour?
Sixty for sun and shower.

How many hours in a day?
Twenty-four for work and play.

How many days in a week?
Seven both to hear and speak.

How many weeks in a month?
Four, as the swift moon runn'th.

How many months in a year?
Twelve the almanack makes clear.

How many years in an age?
One hundred says the sage.

How many ages in time?
No one knows the rhyme.

WHAT will you give me for my pound?
Full twenty shillings round.
What will you give me for my shilling?
Twelve pence to give I'm willing.
What will you give me for my penny?
Four farthings, just so many.

JANUARY cold desolate;
February all dripping wet;
March wind ranges;
April changes;
Birds sing in tune
To flowers of May,
And sunny June
Brings longest day;
In scorched July
The storm-clouds fly
Lightning-torn;
August bears corn,
September fruit;
In rough October
Earth must disrobe her;
Stars fall and shoot
In keen November;
And night is long
And cold is strong
In bleak December.

WHAT is pink? a rose is pink
By the fountain's brink.
What is red? a poppy's red
In its barley bed.
What is blue? the sky is blue
Where the clouds float thro'.
What is white? a swan is white
Sailing in the light.
What is yellow? pears are yellow,
Rich and ripe and mellow.
What is green? the grass is green,
With small flowers between.
What is violet? clouds are violet
In the summer twilight.
What is orange? why, an orange,
Just an orange!

MOTHER shake the cherry-tree,
Susan catch a cherry;
Oh how funny that will be,
Let's be merry!

One for brother, one for sister,
Two for mother more,
Six for father, hot and tired,
Knocking at the door.

A PIN has a head, but has no hair:
A clock has a face, but no mouth there;
Needles have eyes, but they cannot see;
A fly has a trunk without lock or key:

A timepiece may lose, but cannot win ;
A corn-field dimples without a chin ;
A hill has no leg, but has a foot ;
A wine-glass a stem, but not a root ;
A watch has hands, but no thumb or finger ;
A boot has a tongue, but is no singer ;
Rivers run, though they have no feet ;
A saw has teeth, but it does not eat ;
Ash-trees have keys, yet never a lock ;
And baby crows, without being a cock.

HOPPING frog, hop here and be seen,
I'll not pelt you with stick or stone :
Your cap is laced and your coat is green ;
Good-bye, we'll let each other alone.

Plodding toad, plod here and be looked at,
You the finger of scorn is crooked at :
But though you're lumpish, you're harmless too ;
You won't hurt me, and I won't hurt you.

WHERE innocent bright-eyed daisies are,
With blades of grass between,
Each daisy stands up like a star
Out of a sky of green.

THE city mouse lives in a house ;—
The garden mouse lives in a bower,
He's friendly with the frogs and toads,
And sees the pretty plants in flower.

The city mouse eats bread and cheese ;—
The garden mouse eats what he can ;
We will not grudge him seeds and stalks,
Poor little timid furry man.

WHAT does the donkey bray about ?
What does the pig grunt through his snout ?
What does the goose mean by a hiss ?
Oh, Nurse, if you can tell me this,
I'll give you such a kiss.

The cockatoo calls 'cockatoo,'
The magpie chatters 'how d' ye do ?'
The jackdaw bids me 'go away,'
Cuckoo cries 'cuckoo' half the day :
What do the others say ?

THREE plum buns
To eat here at the stile
In the clover meadow,
For we have walked a mile.

One for you, and one for me,
And one left over :
Give it to the boy who shouts
To scare sheep from the clover.

A MOTHERLESS soft lambkin
Alone upon a hill ;
No mother's fleece to shelter him
And wrap him from the cold :—
I'll run to him and comfort him,
I'll fetch him, that I will ;
I'll care for him and feed him
Until he's strong and bold.

DANCING on the hill-tops,
Singing in the valleys,
Laughing with the echoes,
Merry little Alice.

Playing games with lambkins
In the flowering valleys,
Gathering pretty posies,
Helpful little Alice.

If her father's cottage
Turned into a palace,
And he owned the hill-tops
And the flowering valleys,
She'd be none the happier,
Happy little Alice.

WHEN fishes set umbrellas up
If the rain-drops run,
Lizards will want their parasols
To shade them from the sun.

THE peacock has a score of eyes,
With which he cannot see;
The cod-fish has a silent sound,
However that may be;

No dandelions tell the time,
Although they turn to clocks;
Cat's-cradle does not hold the cat,
Nor foxglove fit the fox.

PUSSY has a whiskered face,
Kitty has such pretty ways;
Doggie scampers when I call,
And has a heart to love us all.

THE dog lies in his kennel,
And Puss purrs on the rug,
And baby perches on my knee
For me to love and hug.

Pat the dog and stroke the cat,
Each in its degree;
And cuddle and kiss my baby,
And baby kiss me.

IF hope grew on a bush,
And joy grew on a tree,
What a nosegay for the plucking
There would be!

But oh in windy autumn,
When frail flowers wither,
What should we do for hope and joy,
Fading together?

I PLANTED a hand
And there came up a palm,
I planted a heart
And there came up balm.

Then I planted a wish,
But there sprang a thorn,
While heaven frowned with thunder
And earth sighed forlorn.

UNDER the ivy bush
One sits sighing,
And under the willow tree
One sits crying:—

Under the ivy bush
Cease from your sighing,
But under the willow tree
Lie down a-dying.

I AM a King,
Or an Emperor rather,
I wear crown-imperial
And prince's-feather;

Golden-rod is the sceptre
I wield and wag,
And a broad purple flag-flower
Waves for my flag.

Elder the pithy
With old-man and sage,
These are my councillors
Green in old age;
Lords-and-ladies in silence
Stand round me and wait,
While gay ragged-robin
Makes bows at my gate.

Before 1894.

THERE is one that has a head without an eye,
And there's one that has an eye without a head:
You may find the answer if you try;
And when all is said,
Half the answer hangs upon a thread.

IF a mouse could fly,
Or if a crow could swim,
Or if a sprat could walk and talk,
I'd like to be like him.

If a mouse could fly,
He might fly away;
Or if a crow could swim,
It might turn him grey;
Or if a sprat could walk and talk,
What would he find to say?

SING me a song.—
What shall I sing?—
Three merry sisters
Dancing in a ring,
Light and fleet upon their feet
As birds upon the wing.

Tell me a tale.—
What shall I tell?—
Two mournful sisters,
And a tolling knell,
Tolling ding and tolling dong,
Ding dong bell.

THE lily has an air,
And the snowdrop a grace,
And the sweetpea a way,
And the heartsease a face,—
Yet there's nothing like the rose
When she blows.

MARGARET has a milking-pail,
And she rises early;
Thomas has a threshing-flail,
And he's up betimes.
Sometimes crossing through the grass
Where the dew lies pearly,
They say 'Good-morrow' as they pass
By the leafy limes.

IN the meadow—what in the meadow?
Bluebells, buttercups, meadowsweet,
And fairy rings for the children's feet
In the meadow.

In the garden—what in the garden?
Jacob's-ladder and Solomon's-seal,
And Love-lies-bleeding beside All-heal
In the garden.

A FRISKY lamb
And a frisky child

Playing their pranks
In a cowslip meadow:
The sky all blue
And the air all mild
And the fields all sun
And the lanes half shadow.

MIX a pancake,
Stir a pancake,
Pop it in the pan;
Fry the pancake,
Toss the pancake,—
Catch it if you can.

THE wind has such a rainy sound
Moaning through the town,
The sea has such a windy sound,—
Will the ships go down?

The apples in the orchard
Tumble from their tree.—
Oh will the ships go down, go down,
In the windy sea?

THREE little children
On the wide wide earth,
Motherless children—
Cared for from their birth
By tender angels.

Three little children
On the wide wide sea,
Motherless children—
Safe as safe can be
With guardian angels.

FLY away, fly away over the sea,
Sun-loving swallow, for summer is done;
Come again, come again, come back to me,
Bringing the summer and bringing the sun.

MINNIE bakes oaten cakes,
Minnie brews ale,
All because her Johnny's coming
Home from sea.
And she glows like a rose,
Who was so pale,
And 'Are you sure the church clock goes?'
Says she.

A WHITE hen sitting
On white eggs three:
Next, three speckled chickens
As plump as plump can be.

An owl and a hawk
And a bat come to see;
But chicks beneath their mother's wing
Squat safe as safe can be.

CURRANTS on a bush,
And figs upon a stem,
And cherries on a bending bough,
And Ned to gather them.

'PLAYING at bob cherry
Tom and Nell and Hugh:
Cherry bob! cherry bob!
There's a bob for you.

Tom bobs a cherry
For gaping snapping Hugh,
While curly-pated Nelly
Snaps at it too.

Look, look, look—
Oh what a sight to see!
The wind is playing cherry bob
With the cherry tree.

Before 1894.

I HAVE but one rose in the world,
And my one rose stands a-drooping:
Oh when my single rose is dead
There'll be but thorns for stooping.

ROSY maiden Winifred,
With a milkpail on her head,
Tripping through the corn,
While the dew lies on the wheat
In the sunny morn.
Scarlet shepherd's-weatherglass
Spreads wide open at her feet
As they pass;
Cornflowers give their almond smell
While she brushes by,
And a lark sings from the sky
'All is well.'

BLIND from my birth,
Where flowers are springing
I sit on earth
All dark.
Hark! hark!
A lark is singing,
His notes are all for me,
For me his mirth:—
Till some day I shall see
Beautiful flowers
And birds in bowers
Where all joy-bells are ringing.

Before 1894.

WHEN the cows come home the milk is coming,
Honey's made while the bees are humming;
Duck and drake on the rushy lake,
And the deer live safe in the breezy brake;
And timid, funny, brisk little bunny
Winks his nose and sits all sunny.

ROSES blushing red and white,
For delight;
Honeysuckle wreaths above,
For love;
Dim sweet-scented heliotrope,
For hope;
Shining lilies tall and straight,
For royal state;
Dusky pansies, let them be
For memory;
With violets of fragrant breath,
For death.

'DING a ding,'
The sweet bells sing,
And say,
'Come, all be gay,'
For a wedding day.

'Dong a dong,'
The bells sigh long,
And call,
'Weep one, weep all,'
For a funeral.

A RING upon her finger,
Walks the bride,
With the bridegroom tall and handsome
At her side.

A veil upon her forehead,
Walks the bride,
With the bridegroom proud and merry
At her side.

Fling flowers beneath the footsteps
Of the bride;
Fling flowers before the bridegroom
At her side.

'FERRY me across the water,
Do, boatman, do.'
'If you've a penny in your purse
I'll ferry you.'

'I have a penny in my purse,
And my eyes are blue;
So ferry me across the water,
Do, boatman, do.'

'Step into my ferry-boat,
Be they black or blue,
And for the penny in your purse
I'll ferry you.'

WHEN a mounting skylark sings
In the sunlit summer morn,
I know that heaven is up on high,
And on earth are fields of corn.

But when a nightingale sings
In the moonlit summer even,
I know not if earth is merely earth,
Only that heaven is heaven.

WHO has seen the wind?
Neither I nor you:
But when the leaves hang trembling
The wind is passing thro'.

Who has seen the wind?
Neither you nor I:
But when the trees bow down their heads
The wind is passing by.

THE horses of the sea
Rear a foaming crest,
But the horses of the land
Serve us the best.

The horses of the land
Munch corn and clover,
While the foaming sea-horses
Toss and turn over.

O SAILOR, come ashore,
What have you brought for me?
Red coral, white coral,
Coral from the sea.

I did not dig it from the ground,
Nor pluck it from a tree;
Feeble insects made it
In the stormy sea.

A DIAMOND or a coal?
A diamond, if you please:
Who cares about a clumsy coal
Beneath the summer trees?

A diamond or a coal?
A coal, sir, if you please:
One comes to care about the coal
What time the waters freeze.

AN emerald is as green as grass;
A ruby red as blood;
A sapphire shines as blue as heaven;
A flint lies in the mud.

A diamond is a brilliant stone,
To catch the world's desire;
An opal holds a fiery spark;
But a flint holds fire.

BOATS sail on the rivers,
And ships sail on the seas;
But clouds that sail across the sky
Are prettier far than these.

There are bridges on the rivers,
As pretty as you please;
But the bow that bridges heaven,
And overtops the trees,
And builds a road from earth to sky,
Is prettier far than these.

THE lily has a smooth stalk,
Will never hurt your hand;
But the rose upon her briar
Is lady of the land.

There's sweetness in an apple tree,
And profit in the corn;
But lady of all beauty
Is a rose upon a thorn.

When with moss and honey
She tips her bending briar,
And half unfolds her glowing heart,
She sets the world on fire.

HURT no living thing:
Ladybird, nor butterfly,
Nor moth with dusty wing,
Nor cricket chirping cheerily,
Nor grasshopper so light of leap,
Nor dancing gnat, nor beetle fat,
Nor harmless worms that creep.

I CAUGHT a little ladybird
That flies far away;
I caught a little lady wife
That is both staid and gay.

Come back, my scarlet ladybird,
Back from far away;
I weary of my dolly wife,
My wife that cannot play.

She's such a senseless wooden thing
She stares the livelong day;
Her wig of gold is stiff and cold
And cannot change to grey.
Before 1873 *and* 1894.

ALL the bells were ringing
And all the birds were singing,
When Molly sat down crying
For her broken doll:
O you silly Moll!
Sobbing and sighing
For a broken doll,
When all the bells are ringing
And all the birds are singing

WEE wee husband,
Give me some money,
I have no comfits,
And I have no honey.

Wee wee wife,
I have no money,
Milk, nor meat, nor bread to eat,
Comfits, nor honey.

I HAVE a little husband
And he is gone to sea;
The winds that whistle round his ship
Fly home to me.

The winds that sigh about me
Return again to him;
So I would fly, if only I
Were light of limb.
Before 1873 *and* 1894.

THE dear old woman in the lane
Is sick and sore with pains and aches,
We'll go to her this afternoon,
And take her tea and eggs and cakes.

We'll stop to make the kettle boil,
And brew some tea, and set the tray,
And poach an egg, and toast a cake,
And wheel her chair round, if we may.

Before 1873 *and* 1894.

SWIFT and sure the swallow,
Slow and sure the snail:
Slow and sure may miss his way,
Swift and sure may fail.

'I DREAMT I caught a little owl
And the bird was blue—'

'But you may hunt for ever
And not find such an one.'

'I dreamt I set a sunflower,
And red as blood it grew—'

'But such a sunflower never
Bloomed beneath the sun.'

WHAT does the bee do?
Bring home honey.
And what does Father do?
Bring home money.
And what does Mother do?
Lay out the money.
And what does baby do?
Eat up the honey.

I HAVE a Poll parrot,
And Poll is my doll,
And my nurse is Polly,
And my sister Poll.

'Polly!' cried Polly,
'Don't tear Polly dolly'—
While soft-hearted Poll
Trembled for the doll.

Before 1873 *and* 1894.

A HOUSE of cards
Is neat and small:
Shake the table,
It must fall.

Find the Court cards
One by one;
Raise it, roof it,—
Now it's done:—
Shake the table!
That's the fun.

THE rose with such a bonny blush,
What has the rose to blush about
If it's the sun that makes her flush,
What's in the sun to flush about

THE rose that blushes rosy red,
She must hang her head;
The lily that blows spotless white,
She may stand upright.

OH fair to see
Bloom-laden cherry tree,
Arrayed in sunny white,
An April day's delight;
Oh fair to see!

Oh fair to see
Fruit-laden cherry tree,

With balls of shining red
Decking a leafy head ;
Oh fair to see !

CLEVER little Willie wee,
Bright-eyed, blue-eyed little fellow ;
Merry little Margery
With her hair all yellow.

Little Willie in his heart
Is a sailor on the sea,
And he often cons a chart
With sister Margery.
Before 1873 *and* 1894.

THE peach tree on the southern wall
Has basked so long beneath the sun,
Her score of peaches great and small
Bloom rosy, every one.

A peach for brothers, one for each,
A peach for you and a peach for me ;
But the biggest, rosiest, downiest peach
For Grandmamma with her tea.
Before 1873 *and* 1894.

A ROSE has thorns as well as honey,
I'll not have her for love or money ;
An iris grows so straight and fine
That she shall be no friend of mine ;
Snowdrops like the snow would chill me ;
Nightshade would caress and kill me ;
Crocus like a spear would fright me ;
Dragon's-mouth might bark or bite me ;
Convolvulus but blooms to die ;
A wind-flower suggests a sigh ;
Love-lies-bleeding makes me sad ;
And poppy-juice would drive me mad :—
But give me holly, bold and jolly,
Honest, prickly, shining holly ;
Pluck me holly leaf and berry
For the day when I make merry.

IS the moon tired ? she looks so pale
Within her misty veil :
She scales the sky from east to west,
And takes no rest.

Before the coming of the night
The moon shows papery white ;
Before the dawning of the day
She fades away.

IF stars dropped out of heaven,
And if flowers took their place,
The sky would still look very fair,
And fair earth's face.

Winged angels might fly down to us
To pluck the stars,
But we could only long for flowers
Beyond the cloudy bars.

'GOOD-BYE in fear, good-bye in sorrow,
Goodbye, and all in vain,
Never to meet again, my dear'—
'Never to part again.'
'Good-bye to-day, good-bye to-morrow,
Good-bye till earth shall wane,
Never to meet again, my dear'—
'Never to part again.'

IF the sun could tell us half
That he hears and sees,
Sometimes he would make us laugh,
Sometimes make us cry:
Think of all the birds that make
Homes among the trees;
Think of cruel boys who take
Birds that cannot fly.

IF the moon came from heaven,
Talking all the way,
What could she have to tell us,
And what could she say?

'I've seen a hundred pretty things,
And seen a hundred gay;
But only think: I peep by night
And do not peep by day!'

O LADY Moon, your horns point toward the east;
Shine, be increased:
O Lady Moon, your horns point toward the west;
Wane, be at rest.

WHAT do the stars do
Up in the sky,
Higher than the wind can blow,
Or the clouds can fly?

Each star in its own glory
Circles, circles still;
As it was lit to shine and set,
And do its Maker's will.

MOTHERLESS baby and babyless mother,
Bring them together to love one another.

CRIMSON curtains round my mother's bed,
Silken soft as may be;
Cool white curtains round about my bed,
For I am but a baby.

BABY lies so fast asleep
That we cannot wake her:
Will the Angels clad in white
Fly from heaven to take her?

Baby lies so fast asleep
That no pain can grieve her;
Put a snowdrop in her hand,
Kiss her once and leave her.

I KNOW a baby, such a baby,—
Round blue eyes and cheeks of pink,
Such an elbow furrowed with dimples,
Such a wrist where creases sink.

'Cuddle and love me, cuddle and love me,'
Crows the mouth of coral pink:
Oh the bald head, and oh the sweet lips,
And oh the sleepy eyes that wink!

LULLABY, oh lullaby!
Flowers are closed and lambs are sleeping;
Lullaby, oh lullaby!
Stars are up, the moon is peeping;
Lullaby, oh lullaby!
While the birds are silence keeping,
(Lullaby, oh lullaby!)
Sleep, my baby, fall a-sleeping,
Lullaby, oh lullaby!

LIE a-bed,
Sleepy head,
Shut up eyes, bo-peep;
Till day-break
Never wake:—
Baby, sleep.

AN ALPHABET

A is the Alphabet, A at its head;
A is an Antelope, agile to run.
B is the Baker Boy bringing the bread,
Or black Bear and brown Bear, both begging for bun.

C is a Cornflower come with the corn;
C is a Cat with a comical look.
D is a dinner which Dahlias adorn;
D is a Duchess who dines with a Duke.

E is an elegant eloquent Earl;
E is an Egg whence an Eaglet emerges.
F is a Falcon, with feathers to furl;
F is a Fountain of full foaming surges.

G is the Gander, the Gosling, the Goose;
G is a Garnet in girdle of gold.
H is a Heartsease, harmonious of hues;
H is a huge Hammer, heavy to hold.

I is an Idler who idles on ice;
I am I—who will say I am not I?
J is a Jacinth, a jewel of price;
J is a Jay, full of joy in July

K is a King, or a Kaiser still higher;
K is a Kitten, or quaint Kangaroo.
L is a Lute or a lovely-toned Lyre;
L is a Lily all laden with dew.

M is a Meadow where Meadowsweet blows;
M is a Mountain made dim by a mist.
N is a nut—in a nutshell it grows—
Or a Nest full of Nightingales singing—oh list!

O is an Opal, with only one spark;
O is an Olive, with oil on its skin.
P is a Pony, a pet in a park;
P is the Point of a Pen or a Pin.

Q is a Quail, quick-chirping at morn;
Q is a Quince quite ripe and near dropping.
R is a Rose, rosy red on a thorn;
R is a red-breasted Robin come hopping.

S is a Snow-storm that sweeps o'er the Sea;
S is the Song that the swift Swallows sing.
T is the Tea-table set out for Tea;
T is a Tiger with terrible spring.

U, the Umbrella, went up in a shower;
Or Unit is useful with ten to unite.
V is a Violet veined in the flower;
V is a Viper of venomous bite.

W stands for the water-bred Whale—
Stands for the wonderful Wax-work so gay.
X, or **XX**, or **XXX**, is ale,
Or Policeman **X**, exercised day after day.

Y is a yellow Yacht, yellow its boat ;
Y is the Yacca, the Yam, or the Yew.
Z is a Zebra, zigzaggèd his coat,
Or Zebu, or Zoöphyte, seen at the Zoo.

Circa 1875.

HADRIAN'S DEATH-SONG TRANSLATED

SOUL rudderless, unbraced,
The body's friend and guest,
Whither away to-day ?
Unsuppled, pale, discased,
Dumb to thy wonted jest.

16 *March* 1876.

MY MOUSE

A VENUS seems my Mouse
Come safe ashore from foaming seas,
Which in a small way and at ease
Keeps house.

An Iris seems my Mouse,
Bright bow of that exhausted shower
Which made a world of sweet herbs flower
And boughs.

A darling Mouse it is :—
Part hope not likely to take wing,
Part memory, part anything
You please.

Venus-cum-Iris Mouse,
From shifting tides set safe apart,
In no mere bottle, in my heart
Keep house.

New Year 1877.

A POOR OLD DOG

PITY the sorrows of a poor old d
Who wags his tail a-begging
his need ;
Despise not even the sorrows o
frog,
God's creature too, and tha
enough to plead ;
Spare puss who trusts us purring
our hearth ;
Spare bunny, once so frisky a
so free ;
Spare all the harmless creatures
the earth :
Spare, and be spared—or w
shall plead for thee ?

Circa 1879.

TO WILLIAM BELL SCOT

MY old admiration before I w
twenty
Is predilect still, now promoted
se'enty.
My own demi-century plus an odd o
Some weight to my judgme
may fairly impart.
Accept this faint flash of a smoulde
ing fun,
The fun of a heavy old heart.

Spring 1882.

COUNTERBLAST ON PENN TRUMPET

IF Mr. Bright retiring does n
please,
And Mr. Gladstone staying giv
offence,
What can man do which is not o
of these ?
Use your own common sense

Yet he's a brave man who abjures
his cause
For conscience' sake: let bygones
be bygones:
Not *this* among the makers of our
laws
The least and last of Johns.

If all our bygones could be piled
on shelves
High out of reach of penny-line
Tyrtæus!
If only all of us could see ourselves
As others see us!

21 July 1882.

MOLE AND EARTHWORM

A HANDY Mole, who plied no shovel
To excavate his vaulted hovel,
While hard at work met in mid-
furrow
An Earthworm boring out his burrow.
Our Mole had dined, and must grow
thinner
Before he gulped a second dinner,
And on no other terms cared he
To meet a Worm of low degree.
The Mole turned-on his blindest
eye,
Passing that base mechanic by.
The Worm, intrenched in actual
blindness,
Ignored or kindness or unkindness.
Each wrought his own exclusive
tunnel,
To reach his own exclusive funnel.

A plough, its flawless track pursuing,
Involved them in one common ruin.
Where now the mine and counter-
mine,
The dined-on and the one to dine?
The impartial ploughshare of ex-
tinction
Annulled them all without distinction.

Before 1886.

TO MARY ROSSETTI

YOU were born in the Spring
When the pretty birds sing
In sunbeamy bowers:
Then dress like a Fairy,
Dear dumpling my Mary,
In green and in flowers.

Circa 1887.

WHAT WILL IT BE?

WHAT will it be, O my soul, what
will it be,
To touch the long-raced-for goal, to
handle and see,
To rest in the joy of joys, in the joy
of the blest,
To rest and revive and rejoice, to
rejoice and to rest?

Before 1893.

SPEECHLESS

LORD, Thou art fullness, I am
emptiness:
Yet hear my heart speak in its
speechlessness,
Extolling Thine unuttered loveliness.

Before 1893.

PLEADING

O LORD, I cannot plead my love of
Thee:
I plead Thy Love of me:—
The shallow conduit hails the un-
fathomed sea.

Before 1893.

A SORROWFUL SIGH OF A PRISONER

LORD, comest Thou to me?
My heart is cold and dead.
Alas that such a heart should be
The place to lay Thy head!

Before 1893.

SCARLET

'I SIT a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.'
Yea, Scarlet Woman, to-day, but not yea at all to-morrow.
Scarlet Queen on a scarlet throne all to-day without sorrow,
Bethink thee—to-day must end, there is no end of to-morrow.

Before 1893.

HOMEWARDS

LOVE builds a nest on earth and waits for rest,
Love sends to heaven the warm heart from its breast,
Looks to be blest and is already blest,
And testifies, 'God's will is always best.'

Before 1893.

COUPLET

FAITH and Hope are wings to Love,
Silver wings to golden Dove.

Before 1893.

ITALIAN POEMS

VERSI

FIGLIA, la Madre disse,
Guardati dall' Amore:
È crudo, è traditore—
Che vuoi saper di più?
Non fargli mai sperare
D' entrare nel tuo petto,
Chè chi gli dà ricetto
Sempre tradito fu.

Colla sua benda al ciglio
È un bel fanciullo, è vero:
Ma sempre è menzognero,
Ma sempre tradirà.
Semplice tu se fidi
Nel riso suo fallace;
Tu perderai la pace,
Nè mai ritornerà.

Ma vedo—già sei stanca
Del mio parlar prudente;
Già volgi nella mente
Il quando, il come, e il chi.
Odimi: i detti miei
Già sai se son sinceri—
E se son falsi o veri
Saprai per prova un dì.

6 *Ottobre* 1849.

L'INCOGNITA

NOBIL rosa ancor non crebbe
Senza spine in sullo stelo:
Se vi fosse, allor sarebbe
Atta immagine di te.
È la luna in mezzo al cielo
Bella è ver ma passeggiera:
Passa ancor la primavera:—
Ah l'immagin tua dov' è?

Circa 1850.

NIGELLA

Purpurea rosa,
Dolce, odorosa,
È molto bella—
Ma pur non è,
O mia Nigella,
Rival di te.

Donna nel velo,
Fior sullo stelo,
Ciascun l' amore
Reclama a sè ;
Ma passa il fiore—
Tu resti a me.

Circa 1850.

CHIESA E SIGNORE

La Chiesa

Vola, preghiera, e digli
Perchè Ti stai lontano ?
Passeggi Tu frai gigli
Portando rosa in mano ?
Non Ti fui giglio e rosa
Quando mi amasti Tu ?
Rivolgiti alla sposa,
O mio Signor Gesù.

Il Signore

Di te non mi scordai,
Sposa mia dolce e mesta :
Se Mi sei rosa il sai,
Chè porto spine in testa.
Ti diedi e core e vita,
Me tutto Io diedi a te,
Ed or ti porgo aita :
Abbi fidanza in Me.

La Chiesa

Vola, preghiera, a Lui,
E grida : Ahi pazienza !
Te voglio e non altrui,
Te senza è tutto senza.
Fragrante più di giglio
E rosa a me sei Tu,
Di Dio l' Eterno Figlio,
O mio Signor Gesù.

Circa 1860.

IL ROSSEGGIAR DELL' ORIENTE

Canzoniere all' Amico lontano.

1

Amor dormente ?

Addio, diletto amico ;
A me non lece amore,
Chè già m' uccise il core
Amato amante.
Eppur per l' altra vita
Consacro a te speranze ;
Per questa, rimembranze
Tante e poi tante.

Dicembre 1862.

2

Amor si sveglia ?

In nuova primavera
Rinasce il genio antico ;
Amor t' insinua ' Spera '—
Pur io nol dico.

S' ' Ama ' ti dice Amore,
S' ei t' incoraggia, amico,
Giurando ' È tuo quel core '—
Pur io nol dico.

Anzi quel cor davvero
Chi sa se valga un fico ?
Lo credo, almen lo spero :
Ma pur nol dico.

Gennaio 1863.

3

SI RIMANDA LA TOCCA-CALDAJA

LUNGI da me il pensiere
D' ereditar l' oggetto
Ch' una fiata in petto
Destar ti seppe amor.
Se più l' usar non vuoi,
Se pur fumar nol puoi,
Dolce ti sia dovere
Il conservarlo ognor.

Circa 1864.

4

BLUMINE RISPONDE

S' IO t' incontrassi nell' eterna pace,
Pace non più, per me saria diletto;
S' io t' incontrassi in cerchio maledetto,
Te più di me lamenterei verace.
Per te mia vita mezzo morta giace,
Per te le notti veglio e bagno il letto:
Eppur di rivederti un dì m' aspetto
In secol che riman, non che in fugace.
E perciò 'Fuggi' io dico al tempo; e omai
'Passa pur' dico al vanitoso mondo.
Mentre mi sogno quel che dici e fai
Ripeto in me, 'Doman sarà giocondo,
Doman sarem'—ma s' ami tu lo sai,
E se non ami a che mostrarti il fondo?

Gennaio 1867.

5

Lassù fia caro il rivederci.

DOLCE cor mio perduto e non
perduto,
Dolce mia vita che mi lasci in
morte,
Amico e più che amico, ti saluto.
Ricordati di me; chè cieche e
corte
Fur le speranze mie, ma furon tue:
Non disprezzar questa mia dura
sorte.
Lascia ch' io dica, 'Le speranze sue
Come le mie languiro in questo
inverno'—
Pur mi rassegnerò, quel che fue fue;
Lascia ch' io dica ancor, 'Con
lui discerno
Giorno che spunta da gelata sera,
Lungo cielo al di là di breve
inferno,
Al di là dell' inverno primavera.'

Gennaio 1867.

6

Non son io la rosa ma vi stetti appresso.

CASA felice ove più volte omai
Siede il mio ben parlando e anco
ridendo,
Donna felice che con lui sedendo
Lo allegri pur con quanto dici e fai
Giardin felice dove passeggiai
Pensando a lui, pensando e no
dicendo,—
Giorno felice fia quand' io m
rendo
Laddove passeggiando a lui pensai.
Ma s' egli vi sarà quand' io v
torno,
S' egli m' accoglie col suo dolc
riso,

Ogni uccelletto canterà dintorno,
La rosa arrossirà nel vago viso:—
Iddio ci dia in eternità quel giorno,
Ci dia per quel giardino il paradiso.

Aprile 1867.

7

Lassuso il caro Fiore.

Se t' insegnasse Iddio
Il proprio Amor così,
Ti cederei, cor mio,
Al caro Fiore.
Il caro Fior ti chiama,
'Fammi felice un dì';—
Il caro Fior che t' ama
Ti chiede amore.

Quel Fiore in paradiso
Fiorisce ognor per te;
Sì, rivedrai quel viso,
Sarai contento:
Intorno al duol ch' è stato
Domanderai 'Dov' è?'
Chè passerà il passato
In un momento.

Ed io per tanta vista
In tutta eternità,
Io qual Giovan Battista
Loderò Dio:
L' Amata tanto amata
Tuo guiderdon sarà,
E l' alma tua salvata
Sarammi il mio.

Aprile 1867.

8

Sapessi pure

Che fai lontan da me,
Che fai, cor mio?
Quel che facc' io
È ch' ognor penso a te.
Pensando, a te sorrido,
Sospiro a te:
E tu lontan da me
Tu pur sei fido?

Maggio 1867.

9

Iddio c' illumini

Quando il tempo avverrà che partiremo
Ciascun di noi per separata via,
Momento che verrà, momento estremo
Quando che fia:

Calcando l' uno inusitata traccia,
Seguendo l'altro il solito suo corso,
Non ci nasca in quel dì vergogna in faccia
Nè in sen rimorso.

Sia che tu vada pria forte soletto,
O sia ch' io ti preceda in quel sentiero,
Deh ricordiamci allor d' averci detto
Pur sempre il vero.

Quanto t' amavo e quanto! e non dovea
Esprimer quell' amor che ti portavo:
Più ma assai più di quel che non dicea
Nel cuor ti amavo.

Più di felicità, più di speranza;
Di vita non dirò, chè è poca cosa:
Dolce-amaro tu fosti in rimembranza
A me gelosa.

Ma a me tu preferisti la virtude,
La veritade, amico: e non saprai
Chi amasti alfin? Soltanto il fior si schiude
D' un sole ai rai.

Se più di me la Veritade amasti,
Gesù fu quel tuo sconosciuto
Amore :—
Gesù, che sconosciuto a lui parlasti,
Vincigli il core.
Maggio 1867.

10

AMICIZIA

Sirocchia son d' Amor.

VENGA Amicizia e sia la benvenuta,
Venga, ma non perciò sen parta
Amore :
Abitan l' uno e l' altra in gentil
core
Che albergo ai pellegrini non rifiuta.
Ancella questa docile e compiuta,
E quei tiranno no ma pio signore :
Regni egli occulto nè si mostri
fuore,
Essa si sveli in umiltà dovuta.
Oggi ed ancor doman per l' amicizia,
E posdomani ancor se pur si vuole,
Chè dolci cose apporta e non
amare :
E venga poi, ma non con luna o
sole,
Giorno d' amor, giorno di gran delizia,
Giorno che spunta non per
tramontare.
Agosto 1867.

11

Luscious and sorrowful.

UCCELLO delle rose e del dolore,
Uccel d' amore,
Felice ed infelice, quel tuo canto
È riso o pianto ?
Fido all' infido, tieni in freddo lido
Spina per nido.
Agosto 1867.

12

O forza irresistibile
Dell' umile preghiera.

CHE Ti darò, Gesù Signor mio
buono ?
Ah quello ch' amo più, quello Ti
dono :
Accettalo, Signor Gesù mio Dio,
Il sol mio dolce amor, anzi il cor
mio ;
Accettalo per Te, siati prezioso ;
Accettalo per me, salva il mio
sposo.
Non ho che lui, Signor, nol dis-
prezzare,
Caro tienlo nel cor fra cose care.
Ricordati del dì che sulla croce
Pregavi Iddio così, con flebil voce,
Con anelante cor : 'Questo che
fanno,
Padre, perdona lor, ch' essi non
sanno.'
Ei pur, Signor, non sa Quello che
sdegna,
Ei pure T' amerà s' uno gl' insegna.
Se tutto quanto appar, che a Te non
piace,
Fugace spuma in mar, nebbia fugace ;
Successo o avversità, contento o
duolo,
Se tutto è vanita fuorchè Tu solo ;
Se chi non prega Te nel vuoto
chiama ;
Se amore amor non è che Te non
ama ;—
Dona Te stesso a noi, ricchi saremo ;
Poi nega quanto vuoi, chè tutto
avremo :
Di mel più dolce Tu, che ben ci
basti ;
D' amore amabil più, Tu che ci
amasti.
Settembre 1867.

13

FINESTRA MIA ORIENTALE

[IN MALATTIA]

VOLGO la faccia verso l' oriente,
Verso il meriggio, ove colui dimora :—
Ben fai che vivi ai lati dell' aurora ;
Chi teco vive par felice gente.
Volgo verso di te l' occhio languente,
Lo spirito che teme e spera ancora ;
Volgiti verso quella che ti onora,
T' ama, ti brama, in core e colla mente.
Debole e stanca verso te mi volgo :
Che sarà mai questo che sento, amico ?
Ogni cara memoria tua raccolgo,—
Quanto dirti vorrei ! ma pur nol dico.
Lungi da te dei giorni me ne dolgo :
Fossimo insieme in bel paese aprico !

Fossimo insieme !
Che importerebbe
U' si facesse
Il nostro nido ?
Cielo sarebbe
Quasi quel lido.
Ah fossi teco,
Col cor ben certo
D' essere amato
Come vorrebbe !
Sì che il deserto
S' infiorirebbe.

Ottobre 1867.

14

EPPURE ALLORA VENIVI

O TEMPO tardo e amaro !—
Quando verrai, cor mio,
Quando, ma quando ?
Siccome a me sei caro
Se cara a te foss' io,
Ti andrei cercando ?

Febbrajo 1868.

15

PER PREFERENZA

FELICE la tua madre,
Le suore tue felici,
Che senton quanto dici,
Che vivono con te,
Che t' amano di dritto
D' amor contento e saggio :
Pur questo lor vantaggio
Non lo vorrei per me.

Quel grave aspetto tuo
Veder di quando in quando,
Frattanto andar pensando
'Un giorno riverrà' ;
Ripeter nel mio core
(Qual rosa è senza spine ?)
'Ei sa che l' amo alfine—
M' ama egli ancor ?' Chi sa ?

È questo assai più dolce
Dell' altro, al parer mio :
Essere in ver desio
O tutto o nulla[1] a te ;
Nè troppo vo' lagnarmi
Ch' or stai da me diviso,
Se un giorno in Paradiso
Festeggerai con me.

Marzo 1868.

[1] Ma no ; se non amante siimi amico :
Quel ch' io sarò per te non tel predico.

16

OGGI

POSSIBIL non sarebbe
Ch' io non t' amassi, O Caro:
Chi mai si scorderebbe
Del proprio core?
Se amaro il dolce fai,
Dolce mi fai l' amaro;
Se qualche amor mi dai,
Ti do l' amore.

Marzo 1868.

17

TI do l' addio,
Amico mio,
Per settimane
Che paion lunghe:
Ti raccomando
Di quando in quando
Circoli quadri,
Idee bislunghe.

Marzo 1868.

18

RIPETIZIONE

CREDEA di rivederti e ancor ti aspetto;
Di giorno in giorno ognor ti vo bramando:
Quando ti rivedrò, cor mio diletto,
Quando ma quando?

Dissi e ridissi con perenne sete,
E lo ridico e vo' ridirlo ancora,
Qual usignol che canta e si ripete
Fino all' aurora.

Giugno 1868.

19

Amico e più che amico mio.

COR mio a cui si volge l' altro mio core
Qual calamita al polo, e non ti trova,
La nascita della mia vita nuova
Con pianto fu, con grida, e con dolore.
Ma l' aspro duolo fummi precursore
Di speranza gentil che canta e cova;
Sì, chi non prova pena amor non prova,
E quei non vive che non prova amore.
O tu che in Dio mi sei, ma dopo Iddio,
Tutta la terra mia ed assai del cielo,
Pensa se non m' è duol disotto a un velo
Parlarti e non ti dir mai che ti bramo:—
Dillo tu stesso a te, dolce cor mio,
Se pur tu m' ami dillo a te ch' io t' amo.

Agosto 1868.

20

Nostre voluntà quieti
Virtù di carità.

VENTO gentil che verso il mezzodì
Soffiando vai, deh porta un mio sospir,
Dicendo ad Un quel che non debbo dir,
Con un sospir dicendogli così:
Quella che diede un 'No' volendo un 'Sì'

(Volendo e non volendo—a che ridir?)
Quella ti manda: È vanità il fiorir
Di questa vita che meniam costì.
Odi che dice e piange: È vanità
Questo che nasce e muore amor mondan:
Deh leva gli occhi, io gli occhi vo' levar,
Verso il reame dove non in van
Amasi Iddio quanto ognun possa amar
Ed il creato tutto in carità.
Agosto 1868.

21

Se così fosse.

Io più ti amai che non mi amasti tu:—
Amen, se così volle Iddio Signor;
Amen, quantunque mi si spezzi il cor,
Signor Gesù.

Ma Tu che Ti ricordi e tutto sai,
Tu che moristi per virtù d' amor,
Nell' altro mondo donami quel cor
Che tanto amai.
Agosto 1868.

L' UOMMIBATTO

O UOMMIBATTO,
Agil, giocondo,
Che ti sei fatto
Irsuto e tondo!
Deh non fuggire
Qual vagabondo,
Non disparire
Forando il mondo:
Pesa davvero
D' un emisfero
Non lieve il pondo.
1869.

COR MIO

COR mio, cor mio,
Più non ti veggo, ma mi rammento
Del giorno spento,
Cor mio.
Pur ti ricordi del lungo amore,
Cor del mio core,
Cor mio?
Circa 1870.

ADRIANO

ANIMUCCIA, vagantuccia, morbiduccia,
Oste del corpo e suora,
Ove or farai dimora?
Palliduccia, irrigidita, svestituccia,
Non più scherzante or ora.
16 *Marzo* 1876.

NINNA-NANNA

1

[ANGELS AT THE FOOT]

ANGELI al capo, al piede;
E qual ricciuto agnello
Dormir fra lor si vede
Il bel mio bambinello.

2

[LOVE ME, I LOVE YOU]

AMAMI, t' amo,
Figliolin mio:
Cantisi, suonisi,
Con tintinnio.

Mamma t' abbraccia,
Cor suo ti chiama;
Suonisi, cantisi,
Ama chi t' ama.

3

[My Baby has a Father and a Mother]

E babbo e mamma ha il nostro figliolino,
Ricco bambino.
Ma ne conosco un altro senza padre
E senza madre—
Il poverino!

4

[Our Little Baby fell Asleep]

S' addormentò la nostra figliolina,
Nè si risveglierà
Per giorni e giorni assai sera o mattina.
Ma poi si sveglierà,
E con cara ridente bocchettina
Ribacerà Mammà.

5

[Kookoorookoo, Kookoorookoo]

Cuccurucù—cuccurucù—
All' alba il gallo canta.
Chicchirichì—chicchirichì—
Di rose il ciel s' ammanta.
Cuccurucù—cuccurucù—
Comincia un gorgheggiare.
Chicchirichì—chicchirichì—
Risalta il sol dal mare.

6

[Baby Cry]

Ohibò piccina
Tutto atterrita!
La medicina
Bever si de':
Uno, due, tre,
Ed è finita.

7

[Eight o'clock]

Otto ore suonano—
Picchia il postino:
Ben cinque lettere
Son per Papà;

Una per te,
Nulla per me;
E un bigliettino
V' è per Mammà.

8

[Bread and Milk for Breakfast]

Nel verno accanto al fuoco
Mangio la mia minestra,
E al pettirosso schiudo la finestra,
Ch' ei pur ne vuole un poco.
[ovvero]
S'affaccia un pettirosso alla finestra—
Vieni vieni a gustar la mia minestra.
Lana ben foderata io porto addosso,
Ma tu non porti che un corpetto rosso.

9

[There's Snow on the Fields]

Gran freddo è infuori, e dentro è freddo un poco:
Quanto è grata una zuppa accanto al fuoco!
Mi vesto di buon panno—
Ma i poveri non hanno
Zuppa da bere e fuoco a cui sedere,
O tetto o panni in questo freddo intenso—
Ah mi si stringe il cor mentre io ci penso.

10

[I Dug and Dug amongst the Snow]

Scavai la neve—sì che scavai—
Ma fior nè foglia spuntava mai.
Scavai la rena con ansia lena,
Ma fior nè foglia spicca da rena.
O vento aprico, con fiato lieve
Sveglia i fioretti, sgela la neve!
Ma non soffiare su quella rena:
Chi soffia in rena perde la lena.

11

[Your Brother has a Falcon]

Sì che il fratello s' ha un falconcello,
E tiene un fior la suora:
Ma che, ma che riman per te,
Il neonato or ora?
Vo' farti cocchio del mio ginocchio,
Minor mio figliolino:
Da capo a piè ti stringo a me,
Minimo piccino.

12

[Hear what the Mournful Linnets say]

Udite, si dolgono mesti fringuelli:—
Bel nido facemmo per cari gemelli,
Ma tre ragazzacci lo misero in stracci.
Fuggì primavera, s'imbruna la sera,
E tempo ci manca da fare un secondo
Niduncolo tondo.

13

[A Baby's Cradle with no Baby in it]

Ahi culla vuota ed ahi sepolcro pieno
Ove le smunte foglie autunno
getta!
Lo spirto aspetta in paradiso ameno,
Il corpo in terra aspetta.

14

[O Wind, why do you never rest?]

Lugubre e vagabondo in terra e in
mare,
O vento, O vento, a che non ti
posare?
Ci trai la pioggia fin dall' occidente,
E la neve ci trai dal nord fremente.

15

[O Wind, where have you been?]

'Aura dolcissima, ma donde siete?'
'Dinfra le mammole—non lo sapete?
Abbassi il viso ad adocchiar l' erbetta
Chi vuol trovar l' ascosa mammoletta.
La madreselva il dolce caldo aspetta:
Tu addolci un freddo mondo, O
mammoletta.'

16

[If I were a Queen]

'Foss' io regina,
Tu re saresti:
Davanti a te
M' inchinerei.'
'Ah foss' io re!
Tu lo vedresti:
Sì che regina
Mi ti farei.'

17

[What are heavy? Sea-sand and Sorrow]

Pesano rena e pena:
Oggi e doman son brevi:

La gioventude e un fior son cose
lievi:
Ed han profondità
Mar magno e magna verità.

18

[A Toadstool comes up in a Night]

Basta una notte a maturare il fungo;
Un secol vuol la quercia, e non par
lungo:
Anzi il secolo breve e il vespro lungo,
Chè quercia è quercia, e fungo è
sempre fungo.

19

[If a Pig wore a Wig]

'Porco la zucca fitta in par-
rucca! . . .
Che gli diresti mai?'
'M' inchinerei, l' ossequierei—
"Ser Porco, come stai?"'
'Ahi guai per caso mai
Se la coda andasse a male?' . . .
'Sta tranquillo—buon legale
Gli farebbe un codicillo.'

20

[Hopping Frog, hop here and be seen]

Salta, ranocchio, e mostrati;
Non celo pietra in mano:
Merletto in testa e verde vesta,
Vattene salvo e sano.
Rospo lordo, deh non celarti:
Tutto il mondo può disprezzarti,
Ma mal non fai nè mal vo' farti.

21

[Where innocent bright-eyed Daisies are]

Spunta la margherita
Qual astro in sullo stelo,
E l' erbetta infiorita
Rassembra un verde cielo.

22

[A Motherless soft Lambkin]

Agnellina orfanellina
Giace in cima alla collina,
Fredda, sola, senza madre,
Senza madre ohimè!
Io sarotti e madre e padre,
Io sarò tua pastorella;
Non tremar, diletta agnella,
Io ci penso a te.

23

[When Fishes set Umbrellas up]

Amico pesce, piover vorrà;
Prendi l' ombrello se vuoi sta
secco.
Ed ecco!
Domani senza fallo si vedra
Lucertolon zerbino
Ripararsi dal sol coll' ombrellino.

24

[A Ring upon her Finger]

Sposa velata,
Inanellata,
Mite e sommessa:
Sposo rapito,
Insuperbito,
Accanto ad essa.

Amici, amori,
Cantando a coro
Davanti a loro
Spargete fiori.

25

[THE HORSES OF THE SEA]

CAVALLI marittimi
Urtansi in guerra,
E meglio ci servono
Quelli di terra.
Questi pacifici
Corrono o stanno;
Quei rotolandosi
Spumando vanno.

26

[O SAILOR, COME ASHORE]

'O MARINARO, che mi apporti tu?'
'Coralli rossi e bianchi tratti in su
Dal mar profondo.
Piante non son nè si scavar da mina:
Minime creature in salsa brina
Fecerne mondo.'

27

[THE ROSE WITH SUCH A BONNY BLUSH]

ARROSSISCE la rosa—e perchè mai?
A cagione del sol: ma, sol, che fai?
E tu, rosa, che t' hai
Che ti fai rosea sì se bene stai?

28

[THE ROSE THAT BLUSHES ROSY RED]

La rosa china il volto rosseggiato,
E bene fà:
Il giglio innalza il viso immacolato,
E ben gli stà.

29

[OH FAIR TO SEE]

O CILIEGIA infiorita,
La bianco-rivestita,
Bella sei tu.
O ciliegia infruttata,
La verde-inghirlandata,
La rosso-incoronata,
Bella sei tu.

30

[GOOD-BYE IN FEAR, GOOD-BYE IN SORROW]

'IN tema e in pena addio,
Addio ma in van, tu sai;
Per sempre addio, cor mio.'
'E poi più mai.'
'Oggi e domani addio,
Nel secolo de' guai
A tutto tempo addio.'
'E poi più mai.'

31

[BABY LIES SO FAST ASLEEP]

'D' UN sonno profondissimo
Dorme la suora mia:
Gli angeli bianchi aligeri
Verranno a trarla via?'
'In sonno profondissimo
Calma e contenta giace:
Un fiore in man lasciamole,
Un bacio in fronte—e pace.'

32

[LULLABY OH LULLABY]

NINNA-NANNA, ninna-nanna,
Giace e dorme l' agnellina.
Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,
Monna Luna s' incammina.

Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,
Tace e dorme l' uccellino.
Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna,
Dormi, dormi, o figliolino.
Ninna-nanna, ninna-nanna.

33

[LIE A-BED]

CAPO che chinasi,
Occhi che chiudonsi—
A letto, a letto,
Sonnacchiosetto!
Dormi, carino,
Fino al mattino,—
Dormi, carino.

Circa State 1878.

SOGNANDO

NE' sogni ti veggo,
Amante ed amico;
Ai piedi ti seggo,
Ti tengo tuttor.
Nè chiedi nè chieggo,
Nè dici nè dico,
L' amore ab antico
Che scaldaci il cor.

Ah voce se avessi
Me stessa a scoprire—
Ah esprimer sapessi
L' angoscia e l' amor!
Ah almen se potessi
A lungo dormire,
Nè pianger nè dire,
Mirandoti ognor!

Circa 1890.

NOTES BY W. M. ROSSETTI

Dedicatory Sonnet, p. lxxiii.—This sonnet formed the inscription or dedication of the volume published in 1881, *A Pageant and other Poems*. Christina Rossetti's books were, with few exceptions, dedicated to her mother; therefore the present inscription can very properly be removed from the position which it would occupy in order of date, and may form the dedication to the entire body of her poems.

The Longer Poems, p. 1.—Christina Rossetti never wrote a poem which could rightly be called long. I have thought it desirable to begin the collection with those few compositions which have some moderate degree of length, not excluding devotional poems. I transgress, in this section, the order of date, for the purpose of putting *Goblin Market* foremost. It has always held a certain primacy amid Christina's poems, and the strict order of date would have brought to the front a poem whose merit by no means qualifies it for such a position—*Repining*.

Goblin Market, p. 1.—The original title of this poem was *A Peep at the Goblins—To M. F. R.—i.e.* Maria Francesca Rossetti. I have more than once heard Christina say that she did not mean anything profound by this fairy tale—it is not a moral apologue consistently carried out in detail. Still the incidents are such as to be at any rate suggestive, and different minds may be likely to read different messages into them. I find at times that people do not see the central point of the story, such as the authoress intended it: and she has expressed it too, but perhaps not with due emphasis. The foundation of the narrative is this: That the goblins tempt women to eat their luscious but uncanny fruits; that a first taste produces a rabid craving for a second taste; but that the second taste is never accorded, and, in default of it, the woman pines away and dies. Then comes the central point: Laura having tasted the fruits once, and being at death's door through inability to get a second taste, her sister Lizzie determines to save her at all hazards; so she goes to the goblins, refuses to eat their fruits, and beguiles them into forcing the fruits upon her with so much insistency that her face is all smeared and steeped with the juices; she gets Laura to kiss and suck these juices off her face, and Laura, having thus obtained the otherwise impossible second taste, rapidly recovers.—This poem was skilfully translated into Italian by our cousin, Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti, under the title of *Il Mercato de' Folletti*, and was published in Florence (Pellas) in 1867. A cantata was made of the English words towards 1872 by Mr. Emanuel Aguilar.

Maids heard the Goblins cry, p. 1.—Various designations are given to the goblins; they are 'goblin men, little men, merchant men, fruit-merchant men.' They certainly had tails, for one merchant was 'whisk-tailed,' and they went 'lashing their tails' when baffled. Then there is the passage, 'One like a wom-

bat prowled obtuse and furry,' etc. The authoress does not appear to represent her goblins as having the actual configuration of brute animals; it was Dante Rossetti who did that in his illustration to the poem (he allows human hands, however). I possess a copy of the *Goblin Market* volume, 1862, with marginal water-colour sketches by Christina—extending up to the poem *Spring* on p. 51 of that volume, but not farther. She draws several of the goblins,—all very slim agile figures in a close-fitting garb of blue; their faces, hands, and feet are sometimes human, sometimes brute-like, but of a scarcely definable type. The only exception is the 'parrot-voiced' goblin who cried 'Pretty goblin.' He is a true parrot (such as Christina could draw one). There are thirty-five such illustrations to *Goblin Market*—the simplest, as of fruit-branches, being the prettiest. When the special edition of *Goblin Market*, with designs by Mr. Laurence Housman, came out in 1893, Christina, although aware that the drawings possess superior artistic merit (a point, however, as to which she was no *judge*), did not exactly take to them as carrying out her own notion of her own goblins.

For there is no friend like a sister, etc., p. 8.—These lines are clearly connected with the original inscription of the poem, 'To M. F. R.' Christina, I have no doubt, had some particular occurrence in her mind, but what it was I know not. The two poems which immediately precede *Goblin Market* in date show a more than normal amount of melancholy and self-reproach; they are *L. E. L.* (p. 344) and *Ash Wednesday* (p. 217).

Repining, p. 9.—This poem was published in *The Germ*, 1850. It is, of all the poems by Christina Rossetti which appeared in that short-lived magazine, the only one which she did not afterwards reprint. No doubt it is far from being excellent; yet it cannot be called bad. In her MS. it is named *An Argument*, and is very considerably longer than in *The Germ*, or hence in the present volume the curtailment was a highly judicious act. The reader will readily perceive that this poem is to some extent modelled upon Parnell's *Hermit*. The moral, however, is different. Parnell aims to show that the dispensations of Providence, though often mysterious, are just. Christina's thesis might be summarized thus: Solitude is dreary, yet the life of man among his fellows may easily be drearier; therefore let not the solitary rebel.

Three Nuns, p. 12.—The second section of this poem was the first written, standing then as a separate composition. The united poem was inserted into the prose tale *Maude*, with the observation 'Pray read the mottoes; put together they form a most exquisite little song which the nuns sing in Italy.' *Maude* was written towards 1850—perhaps earlier. It was published in 1897, but the poem of *Three Nuns* was excluded from it on copyright grounds. The meaning of the mottoes runs thus: This heart sighs, and I know not wherefore. It may be sighing for love, but to me it says not so. Answer me, my heart, wherefore sighest thou? It answers: I want God—I sigh for Jesus.

The Lowest Room, p. 16.—The original title of this poem was *A Fight over the Body of Homer*—perhaps the better title of the two; it contains, in MS., various stanzas which were omitted in publication. This is the poem of which Dante Gabriel Rossetti, in a published letter to his sister, dated 1875, made the following remarks:—'A real taint, to some extent, of modern vicious style, derived from that same source [Mrs. Browning]—what might be called a falsetto muscularity—always seemed to me much too prominent in the long piece called *The Lowest Room*. This I think is now included for the first time, and I am sorry for it. . . . Everything in which this tone appears is utterly foreign to your primary impulses. . . . If I were you, I would rigidly keep guard on this

matter if you write in the future; and ultimately exclude from your writings everything (or almost everything) so tainted.' Christina, on receiving this letter, did not acquiesce in its purport, but later on seemed a little more inclined to do so. However, she always retained *The Lowest Room* in succeeding editions. To me it hardly appears that my brother's view can be pronounced correct. The real gist of *The Lowest Room—i.e.* the final acceptance, by the supposed speaker, of a subordinate and bedimmed position—is clearly the very reverse of 'falsetto muscularity'; if anything of that kind shows in the earlier part of the poem, it shows only to be waved aside.

From House to Home, p. 20.—I have always regarded this poem as one of my sister's most manifest masterpieces; though it is true that the opening of it would perhaps not have taken its present form had it not been for the precedent of Tennyson's *Palace of Art*. In this respect resemblances are obvious; but divergencies also are of the very essence of the poem. When a question arose as to publishing it (in the *Goblin Market* volume) my brother called attention to the point, penciling on the MS. note-book, 'This is so good it cannot be omitted; but could not something be done to make it less like *Palace of Art*?' Christina, however, did nothing at all in that direction; she substituted the present title for the original one, *Sorrow not as those who have no hope*. The essence of the poem is the severance of a human heart from the joys and the loves of earth, to centre in the joys and the loves of heaven; that it is in part a personal utterance is a fact too plain to need exposition. The three poems which in date immediately precede *From House to Home* are *The Love of Christ which passeth Knowledge*, *A Shadow of Dorothea*, and *By the Sea* (or rather a more personal and melancholy lyric poem from which *By the Sea* is extracted); next after *From House to Home* comes *New Year's Eve*. If the reader cares to turn to these several poems, he will see in all of them evidence of a spirit sorely wrung, and clinging for dear life to a hope not of this world. As elucidating this phase of feeling, so prominent in many of Christina Rossetti's poems, I may refer to the *Memoir*, p. lii.

The Prince's Progress, p. 26.—The original nucleus of this poem is the dirge-song at its close—'Too late for love, too late for joy,' etc. This was written in 1861, and entitled *The Prince who arrived too late*. When Christina Rossetti was looking up, in 1865, the material for a fresh poetical volume, it was, I believe, my brother who suggested to her to turn the dirge into a narrative poem of some length. She adopted the suggestion—almost the only instance in which she wrote anything so as to meet directly the views of another person.

A Royal Princess, p. 35.—This poem was first printed in 1863, in a small volume named *Poems: an Offering to Lancashire*, which was got up 'for the relief of distress in the cotton-districts,' *i.e.* the 'Cotton Famine,' consequent upon the civil war in the United States. The volume contained contributions by other writers as well—George MacDonald, Allingham, Mary Howitt, Isa Craig, Lord Houghton, Locker-Lampson, Dante Rossetti, etc. That first printed form of the poem contains some variants from the present form, which is the same as in the *Prince's Progress* volume. It is rather singular that Christina should have written in October 1861, before any suggestion of the Cotton Famine began, a poem which, when she was soon afterwards asked to contribute something for this object, came in so markedly appropriate.

Maiden-Song, p. 38.—This simple light-hearted poem—a kind of cross between the tone of a fairy-tale and that of a nursery-song, each of them sweetened

into poetry—was deservedly something of a favourite with its authoress.

The Iniquity of the Fathers upon the Children, p. 41.—This title formed at first, in the volume of 1866, the motto of the poem, its title then being *Under the Rose*. The change was made in the re-edition of 1875. In a copy of that re-edition I find a note by Christina as follows: 'This was all fancy, but Mrs. [W. Bell] Scott afterwards told me of a somewhat similar fact.' It seems to me that the 'fancy' may have been partly guided by a leading incident in Dickens's *Bleak House*.

The Months: A Pageant, p. 48.—This *Pageant*, which was written at Seaford, has been acted more than once, at any rate in girls' schools. I remember an instance reported from America not long before the authoress's death. Indeed this was partly in her view in writing the poem.

OCTOBER.

Here comes my youngest sister looking dim
And grim,
With dismal ways.—p. 54.

Christina had a considerable spice of fun in her composition, as well as profound seriousness and rooted melancholy. She wrote these lines regarding November with a side-glance at herself—or at any rate quoted them sometimes as a telling self-description.

A Ballad of Boding, p. 55.—I give to this the date 'before 1882,' on the ground that it was published in the *Pageant* volume, 1881. The MSS. of Christina Rossetti's poems, up to 11 June 1866, are, with few exceptions, extant and dated in notebooks; but after that time, although several MSS. exist, few precise dates are traceable. Christina published the *Prince's Progress* volume in 1866—the *Pageant* volume in 1881. The reader will understand that, in saying 'before 1882'—in this instance, and the like in several others—I do not imply that the composition was writte *shortly* before 1882, for it *may* date any time between June 1866 and 188 I am seldom, in such cases, able approximate the true date nearer tha this.

Monna Innominata, p. 58.—To an one to whom it was granted to be behin the scenes of Christina Rossetti's life- and to how few was this granted—it not merely probable but certain that th 'sonnet of sonnets' was a person utterance—an intensely personal on The introductory prose-note, abo 'many a lady sharing her lover's poet aptitude,' etc., is a blind—not an u truthful blind, for it alleges nothing th is not reasonable, and on the surfac correct, but still a blind interposed draw off attention from the writer in h proper person.

Sonnet 1, p. 58.—Some English reade may like to see the mottoes of th sonnet and of its successors anglicize I give them so here; the reader wi observe for himself that in every instanc the first sentence comes from Dante, an the second from Petrarca: 1. The da that they have said adieu to their swe friends. Love, with how great a stre dost thou vanquish me to-day!—2. was already the hour which turns bac the desire. I recur to the time when first saw thee.—3. Oh shades, empt save in semblance! An imaginary guid conducts her.—4. A small spark foste a great flame. Every other thing, eve thought, goes off, and love alone remai there with you.—5. Love, who exemp no loved one from loving. Love led m into such joyous hope.—6. Now can thou comprehend the quantity of the lo which glows in me towards thee. I d not choose that Love should release m from such a tie.—7. Here always Sprin and every fruit. Conversing with m and I with him.—8. As if he were say to God, 'I care for nought else.' hope to find pity, and not only pardo —9. O dignified and pure conscience

Spirit more lit with burning virtues.—10. With better course and with better star. Life flees, and stays not an hour.—11. Come after me, and leave folk to talk. Relating the casualties of our life.—12. Love, who speaks within my mind. Love comes in the beautiful face of this lady.—13. And we will direct our eyes to the Primal Love. But I find a burden to which my arms suffice not.—14. And His will is our peace. Only with these thoughts, with different locks.

An Old-World Thicket, p. 64.—This poem bears a certain analogy to the earlier one, *From House to Home*. I think it sustains the comparison, though pitched in a lower key. The essence of *From House to Home* is unison with the Church Triumphant, through self-abnegation. The essence of the *Old-World Thicket* might be expressed in a quotation from St. Paul: 'The creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.' The poem does not, as I read it, relate to the Church Triumphant, nor in a very express form to the Church Militant; rather, at the close of the poem, to the scheme of redemption, and the flock of Christ.

All Thy works praise Thee, O Lord, p. 68.—In 1897 Prebendary Glendinning Nash, the Incumbent of Christ Church, Woburn Square (the church frequented by Christina Rossetti in all her closing years), adapted a portion of this poem for a harvest festival under the name *A Processional of Creation*. It was set to music by Mr. Frank T. Lowden, and sung at the evening service in that church, 21 October.

Later Life, p. 73.—The authoress terms this 'a double sonnet of sonnets'; and I apprehend that the majority of it must have been written with a definite intention that its various constituent parts should form one whole. Probably, when the general framework was getting into shape, two or three outlying sonnets were pressed into the service.

Sonnet 17, 'Past certain cliffs,' etc., p. 78.—I consider that the beach of Hastings and St. Leonard's is here intended.

Sonnet 18, p. 79.—This sonnet is altered—*i.e.* its octave is entirely different—from the sonnet named *Cor Mio* (p. 389).

Sonnet 21, p. 79.—The reference to foreign travel in this sonnet and its successor relates to the year 1865, when Christina, along with our mother, accompanied me to North Italy through Switzerland.

Sonnet 22, 'Struck harmonies,' etc., p. 80.—I think this is spoken figuratively—not as implying that my sister actually wrote or even composed 'a song' concerning the Alps. If she composed any such, it seems to have remained unpublished and untraced.

Sonnet 25, p. 81.—This sonnet, being written before 1882, cannot relate in part to the death of Dante Gabriel or of our mother. So far as it relates to any particular death, that of our sister Maria may have been mainly in the writer's thought—assuming (that is) that the sonnet was written after November 1876.

Sonnet 27, p. 81.—This forecast of death came singularly true; for, if one had been writing a condensed account of Christina Rossetti's last days and hours in December 1894, one might have described them very nearly in these terms. Perhaps, however, few among her Christian readers will suppose that she 'may have missed the goal at last.' The reference to a 'saint rejoicing on her bed' may glance at Maria.

Juvenilia, p. 82.—When I was editing, soon after my sister's death, those compositions of hers which were published as *New Poems* in 1896, I put

at the end of the volume all the *Juvenilia*, *i.e.* all the poems written before she completed, on 5 December 1847, her seventeenth year. My object naturally was to set a certain stamp of inferiority on the *Juvenilia*, lest readers of that volume should suppose that these compositions were accepted or presented by me as standing on a footing of equality with work of a less immature age. In the present complete edition of the Poems I do not see that any such precaution can be necessary; and I therefore place the *Juvenilia* immediately after *The Longer Poems*, in the position which belongs to them according to order of date.

To my Mother, on the Anniversary of her Birth, p. 82.—These are the first verses that Christina ever produced; written as they were on 27 April 1842, she was then aged eleven years and a third. I presume that we were all a little surprised at her 'coming out' in this line, but have no express recollection of details. Our grandfather, Gaetano Polidori, who kept a private printing-press, printed the lines at once on a card; he afterwards, 1847, included them in the small volume named *Verses*. I need not say that the lines are regarded by me as in no sense approaching towards excellence. In the first of Christina's note-books these two quatrains appear, and the dates for later productions go on to 3 December 1845; and my mother has written on the flyleaf the following 'N.B.,' which may be worth quoting:—'These verses are truly and literally by my little daughter, who scrupulously rejected all assistance in her rhyming efforts, under the impression that in that case they would not be her own.' At some date—it may have been towards 1850—Christina took it into her head to make some little coloured illustrations to that printed volume of *Verses*; they are slight and amateurish—one might indeed say childish. There is a certain degree of fancy in them, however; and Dante Gabriel always considered that our sister, had she chosen to study and take pains, might have done something as an artist. To the present small poem the emblem is two sprigs of heartsease. As I proceed I shall mention other devices, whenever they seem to present any point of interest. I may also mention here that there is another copy of the *Verses* illustrated with pencil designs by Dante Gabriel: they must have been made very soon after the booklet was printed—certainly before the autumn of 1848. The frontispiece is a very truthful profile likeness of Christina. Then follow designs to *The Ruined Cross* (which poem I have not thought good enough for reprinting here), *Tasso and Leonora*, *Lady Isabella*, and *The Dream*. This copy, neatly bound, was presented by our grandfather to the authoress: on the fly leaf he wrote some verses of his own to her, which had accompanied a bunch of red and white roses. The profile likeness of Christina, mentioned above, is the one whence was taken a tracing which has been reproduced in the published volume of *Letters by Dante G. Rossetti to William Allingham*.

The Chinaman, p. 82.—This trifle had not hitherto been printed among Christina's compositions, only in the book published in 1895—*Dante Gabriel Rossetti, his Family-letters, with a Memoir* by myself. The account which I there give of the verses is substantially as follows:—The year 1842 was the year of the Anglo-Chinese Opium War. I was told by one of my schoolmasters to make an original composition on the subject of China, and I think the composition had to be in verse. What I wrote I have totally forgotten. Christina saw me at work, and chose to enter the poetic lists. She produced the present lines.—So far as I can trace, this was quite, or very nearly, the first thing that Christina wrote in verse, after the two stanzas *To my Mother*. About three months before her death I happened to be talking to her as to this and other old family reminiscences, and I found her to

be under the impression that, by the time when she wrote *The Chinaman*, she had already done various other small things. Still, looking to known and probable dates, I cannot make it out to be so. Luckily the question is not of high importance to the literary world.

Charity, p. 84.—Christina's note to these lines in MS. is as follows: 'The foregoing verses are imitated from that beautiful little poem *Virtue* by George Herbert.'

Love Ephemeral, p. 84.—Device: the crescent moon, with a lunar (more like a solar) rainbow.

Burial Anthem, p. 84.—I have an impression that this was written in relation to the death of some young clergyman esteemed in our household; there was not any death in our immediate family about that date. Device: a sprig of blue and pink forget-me-not.

Lines to my Grandfather, p. 85.—This trifling performance is included among the *Juvenilia*, not because it is good, but because it has a personal flavour. My sister was at the time, I think, staying with some friends in the country not far from London. Two rhyme-words in the final stanza are obviously rhymes, not sense.

The End of Time, p. 87.—Device: a rose crossing a scythe; within the angle of the scythe, an hour-glass.

Couplet, p. 88.—This was an oral improvise. As I found occasion to introduce it into my Memoir of Dante Rossetti (1895), I may as well repeat the trifle here. Of course, the first line of the *Couplet* comes from a well-known old-fashioned song.

Amore e Dovere, p. 88.—There is a letter from Christina to Dante Gabriel, 1865, saying that the second stanza should be cut out. She assigns no reason, and I think best to leave it in: the reader can give it any consideration he likes. In stanza 3 no rhyme is supplied to 'lagni'—seemingly an oversight.

Mother and Child, p. 88.—Mr. William Sharp published in *The Atlantic Monthly* for June 1895 a very sympathetic and interesting article, *Some Reminiscences of Christina Rossetti*. Here he says that on one occasion Dante Gabriel 'pointed out that Blake might have written the four verses called *Mother and Child*.' It would seem truer to say that Blake might have written a lyric of higher quality, embodying much the same conception. Device: some flowers of undefined genus, with sun-rays behind them.

Mary Magdalene, p. 89.—As the date shows, these simple and somewhat touching verses were written on 8 February 1846. On 30 March Christina wrote a different poem, *Divine and Human Pleading*—of a slightly 'preachy' kind, dissuading from the invocation of saints. Then, in the printed volume *Verses*, the two compositions, under the second title, were joined together. I am certain that the *Mary Magdalene* is better singly; and I so give it, omitting the *Divine and Human Pleading*.

On the Death of a Cat, p. 89.—This cat belonged to our aunt, Eliza Harriet Polidori. Device: a cat, in a rather sentimental attitude of languor, extending its right arm over a kitten. The cat is sandy and white, the kitten tabby.

To Elizabeth Read, with some Postage-stamps for a Collection, p. 90.—Miss Read was a young lady under the tuition of our sister Maria: she is now Mrs. Bull, widow of a leading physician in Hereford. Christina had a most cordial liking for her. The design to this trifle is a human personation of one of the stamps, bowing in the character of a 'humble servant,' and wearing the 'livery of red and black,' of a sort of mediæval cut.

Love Defended, p. 90.—Device: a

blind man (stanza 3) groping, with trees in the background.

The Martyr, p. 91.—Device: the soul of the martyr received into heaven by an angel. Between the angel's wings are a series of red and white curves, symbolizing (I suppose) the nine heavens, as in Dante.

The Dying Man to his Betrothed, p. 92.—Device: a rosebush intertwined by a snake.

Gone for Ever, p. 95.—This comes properly among the *Juvenilia*, according to the order of date. It was written before Christina was sixteen years of age, and was included in the privately printed *Verses*. Device: a moss-rose, not fully blown. When she was preparing the *Prince's Progress* volume, 1866, she considered the present lyric good enough to be published—and I suppose no one has questioned her discretion in this respect; and published it was, without any change of diction at all. I have felt some doubt whether, under these circumstances, I ought to include it among the *Juvenilia* or not. On the whole I have thought it best to do so; it gains rather than loses in interest by this observance of the order of date.

The Time of Waiting, p. 95.—Device: a damsel on a steep green slope, stretching her arms up longingly; from the sky a black-hooded woman, or spectre, addresses her with an action of admonition. This seems to be apposite chiefly to triplet 2.

Tasso and Leonora, p. 96.—Device: the shooting star in a female form.

Love, p. 97.—In February 1847 Christina wrote a weak affair, four stanzas, which she entitled *Praise of Love*. This is the final stanza (much superior to the others), and got at last published in *Time Flies*. It was not reproduced in the *Verses* of 1893.

Resurrection Eve, p. 98.—Device: a white grave-cross, two palm-shrubs interlacing above it; in the sky, crescent moon and star.

The Dead City, p. 99.—This was originally called *The City of Statues*. In point of length it ranks among *The Longer Poems*, but my arrangement retains it among the *Juvenilia*. The reader will, no doubt, perceive that it bears a certain relation to a story in *The Arabian Nights*, which was one of the comparatively few books that my sister, from a very early age, read frequently and with delight. Beyond this, taken along with what is obviously indicated in the poem itself, I cannot say whether any particular intention was present to her mind.

Came and stole them from their master, p. 99.—This has been remarked upon as a palpable make-rhyme, on the assumption that (if either of the two) the word ought to be 'mistress.' But there is no clear reason why the 'I' of the narrative should be a woman; a phrase a little further on strongly suggests the contrary—'Before me the birds had never Seen a *man*.'

Spring Quiet, p. 103.—As in the case of *Gone for Ever*, this is a very early poem, included in the *Prince's Progress* volume.

The Dream, p. 104.—I am not sure whether the first short quatrain here printed is an integral portion of the poem, or rather a quotation from some other writer; I fancy the latter.

Eleanor, p. 105.—This may be a portrait from the life—I know not now of whom.

Isidora, p. 106.—Maturin's romance *Melmoth the Wanderer* is, I suppose, still known to several readers; it was republished some few years ago. Yet it may be as well to say, in explanation of the present poem, that Melmoth is a personage who has made a compact with the Devil, thereby securing an enormous length of life (say at least a century and

a half), and the power of flitting at will from land to land. At the end of the term, Melmoth's soul is to be forfeited, unless he can meanwhile induce some one else to take the compact off his hands. Melmoth makes numerous efforts in this direction, but all abortive. One of his intended victims is a beautiful girl named Immalee, a child of Nature in an Indian island—a second Miranda. She becomes deeply enamoured of Melmoth, but resists his tamperings with her soul. She is finally identified as the daughter of a Spanish Grandee, and is then baptized as Isidora. At one point of the story she espouses Melmoth, and bears him a child. Christina's poem is her deathbed scene. The last line is truly a fine stroke of pathos and of effect; but it is not Christina's—it comes *verbatim* out of Maturin.

Zara, p. 107.—See the note on the poem *Look on this picture, and on This* (p. 323). In the novel of *Women*, Zara is the rival (she finally turns out to be the mother) of Eva; she is a shining leader of society. In the same year, 1847, when she wrote *Zara*, my sister wrote a separate composition, *Eva*. Its merit is but middling, and I do not reproduce it here. The device to *Zara* is a foxglove plant, with insects sucking its poison-honey.

Immalee, p. 108.—See the note (p. 66) on *Isidora*.

Heart's Chill between, p. 109.—This poem, called at first *The Last Hope*, was published under its present title in *The Athenæum*, 14 October 1848, being the first poem by Christina that got published. It was reprinted in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book, 1898. When I was compiling, in 1895, the volume named *New Poems*, I omitted this composition, thinking that, as it comes, in point of date, near the close of the *Juvenilia*, it ought to have been better than it is, and was hardly good enough for re-publication. The revival of the poem by Mr. Bell alters the conditions somewhat, so I now put it in.

Lady Isabella, p. 109.—This was Lady Isabella Howard, a daughter of the Earl of Wicklow; she was a pupil of my aunt, Charlotte Polidori. My sister entertained an ardent admiration for the loveliness of character and person which marked this young lady, who died of a decline at the age of eighteen or thereabouts.

Night and Death, p. 109.—It may reasonably be assumed that this lyric also has some reference to the death of Lady Isabella Howard.

Death's Chill between, p. 110.—See the preceding note upon *Heart's Chill between*. *Death's Chill between* was published in *The Athenæum*, 21 October 1848. It was originally named *Anne of Warwick*, and was intended to represent (in a rather 'young-ladyish' form) the dolorous emotions and flitting frenzy of Anne, when widowed of her youthful husband, the Prince of Wales, slain after the battle of Tewkesbury. If I remember right, this poem was offered to *The Athenæum* at the same time as *Heart's Chill between;* and my brother then substituted these titles for the original ones, so as to establish between the two a certain relation of contrast in similarity. At the present distance of date, it might perhaps have served better to preserve the first titles. My observations as to the exclusion of *Heart's Chill between* from the *New Poems* apply to this composition as well.

The Lotus-Eaters, p. 111.—Of course the sentiment here, as well as the title, comes to some considerable extent out of Tennyson.

One Certainty, p. 119.—This appears to have been written during a period of illness. In the MS. notebook, the next preceding poem is the sonnet *Rest*, in Christina's own handwriting (15 May); then the present sonnet and *Looking Forward* (8 June) are in our mother's handwriting. Again, on 31 August, *A Testimony* is in Maria's. Towards this period, and even before, Christina's state

of health gave rise to serious anxiety. See the *Memoir*, p. l.

Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims, p. 120.—This series of poems continues inclusively up to the verses *Looking back along life's trodden way*, p. 145. It consists of lyrics out of three volumes—those which are named respectively *Called to be Saints* (1881), *Time Flies* (1885), and *The Face of the Deep* (1892). *Called to be Saints*, though only published in 1881, was written (as shown by a letter from Christina dated in December 1880) 'several years' before that date—possibly 1877: therefore, in quoting poems from that volume, I give the date '*circa* 1877.' The poems from all three volumes were reprinted in the *Verses* (1893) published by the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge; and then, for the first time, they were ordered under one general heading, as given above. In this instance, and in others ensuing later on, I, as a matter of course, follow the arrangement made by my sister, although it entails a certain interference with the order of date. The *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims* form the eighth and last (not the first) section of those which make up the volume *Verses;* I place it here first because one of its compositions dates as early as 2 March 1850. In the present complete edition, this point, rather than the sequence of sections in the previously issued volume, seems to govern the question. The eight sections (which will be found reproduced one by one as we proceed) take the following order in the *Verses:* (1) *Out of the Deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord;* (2) *Christ our All in All;* (3) *Some Feasts and Fasts;* (4) *Gifts and Graces;* (5) *The World—Self-destruction;* (6) *Divers Worlds—Time and Eternity;* (7) *New Jerusalem and its Citizens;* (8) *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims.*

Her Seed: It shall bruise thy head, p. 120. This poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*, and would, in ordinary course, stand dated by me 'before 1893.' But a note made in that book by Christina shows that it was written before the date of our mother's death (which was in April 1886), so I name a date to correspond. The note in question runs: 'This one dearest mamma heard and liked.'

Judge nothing before the time, p. 121 —From *Time Flies*. The lines form the entry for 16 January, and appear to be intended to be read as a sequel to the entry for the 15th, which is on the text 'In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth,' followed by a reflection that 'Adam's initial work of production (so far as we are told) was sin, death, hell, for himself and his posterity.'

Man's life is but a working day, p. 121.—This stanza is modified from the conclusion of the little poem *In Patience* (p. 238). In its present form it belongs to *Time Flies*.

Marvel of marvels, etc., p. 122.—It will be observed that this poem—like the *Passing Away*, at p. 191—is made up of one sole rhyme-sound; I think it holds nearly as high a rank among the authoress's verses. Its principal reference is, no doubt, to the deaths of her sister and mother.

Afterward he repented, and went, p. 123.—In *Time Flies* this lyric, which has an energetic personal tone, stands without any title, as the entry for 11 May. I do not remember that any salient event of Christina's life was associated with that particular day, but may mention that 12 May was the birthday of Dante Gabriel, and the prose entry for this latter day might, without much straining, be supposed to have a certain reference to him; he had died three years before *Time Flies* was published. It may be that the two entries were, in some degree, 'read together' in their author's mind as having a relation to him.

Are they not all Ministering Spirits, p. 124.—The precise bearing of this poem becomes clearer when we observe its origin in text in *The Face of the Deep*. It comes after the text—'And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had

seven vials full of the last seven plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the Bride, the Lamb's wife.' The point specially raised in the prose comment, which leads up to the poem, is that this gracious and joyful message is delivered by one of those same angels who poured forth the plagues.

Our life is long, etc., p. 124.—This piece appeared in *Time Flies*, and I date it accordingly 'Before 1886.' But, on reference to p. 185, it will be seen that this is a modification of a much earlier poem, *How Long?*—dated 14 April 1856. As there are some fundamental differences between the two pieces, I print both here.

Lord, what have I to offer? etc., p. 124.—The reference to 'a heart-breaking loss' seems to indicate that these lines refer to some particular event in my sister's life. They appear in *Time Flies*, under the date 24 April; I do not identify any such event with that day, but can easily conceive a relation in the poem to some different day.

Can I know it?—Nay, p. 125.—This composition (from *The Face of the Deep*) forms a sort of meditation on the words addressed by Christ to the Church of Philadelphia. Amid those words comes the expression 'Thou hast a little strength.' On this the authoress comments (in prose)—'Why not much strength? God knoweth.' And soon afterwards the poem ensues.

What is it Jesus saith unto the soul? p. 127.—This sonnet, in its first form, was written on 2 March 1850. As printed, the octave is not much altered, but the sextett is entirely recast. The title used to be *Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.* The first form of the sonnet appears printed in the prose tale *Maude*, published in 1897.

'The sinner's own fault,' etc., p. 128.—Stanza 1 is a modification of stanza 7 in *Margery* (p. 360).

Who would wish back the saints, etc., p. 129.—These three stanzas, now altered in metre and diction, formed at first a portion of the poem *Better so* (see p. 351).

Where shall I find a white rose blowing? p. 131.—This was first printed for a bazaar, held in June 1884, for the Boys' Home at Barnet, founded by Colonel Gillum. It was then named *Roses and Roses.*

Now they desire a Better Country, p. 132.—In a copy of *Time Flies*, Christina marked this as 'my first roundel.'

These all wait upon Thee, p. 132.—This stanza comes (with some verbal modifications) out of the poem *To what purpose is this Waste?* (see p. 305).

Doeth well . . . doeth better, p. 132.—I consider that this poem relates to Maria Francesca Rossetti, who had died in 1876. Christina often called her playfully 'Moon' or 'Moony.'

Vanity of Vanities, p. 133.—These stanzas, altered in diction, come out of the poem *Yet a Little While* (p. 342).

Scarce tolerable Life, which all life long, p. 133.—I date this sonnet '*circa* 1884,' because I find the rough draft of it written upon a scrap of paper which bears the date 'Easter Eve 1884.'

Alleluia! or Alas! my heart is crying, p. 135.—This little poem comes from *The Face of the Deep.* It depends immediately upon those texts of *The Apocalypse* which purport that 'the kings of the earth' were 'saying, Alas, alas, that great city Babylon!' on the same occasion when 'much people in heaven' were 'saying, Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power unto the Lord our God.' From this consideration the authoress proceeds to reflect upon the alternative in her own spiritual state.

The Flowers appear on the Earth, p. 135.—Originally these two stanzas formed a part of the poem *I have a Message unto Thee*, p. 316. Their diction has been slightly altered, but only slightly.

Bury Hope out of sight, etc., p. 137.—In *Time Flies* this forms the entry for 5 December, which was the authoress's birthday. I assume that it was purposely inserted in relation to that anniversary,

and probably to the death of Charles Bagot Cayley on the same day.

A Churchyard Song of Patient Hope, p. 138.—Christina, in placing this poem in the *Verses* next after the last-named, seems to have intended that the two should be read together. The original framework of the *Churchyard Song* was quite different: it formed in *The Face of the Deep* part of the reflections upon the Apocalyptic text, 'And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes,' etc.

One woe is past, etc., p. 138.—Naturally this poem belongs, in *The Face of the Deep*, to the same words in chap. ix. of *The Apocalypse*. As arranged in the *Verses*, I think Christina intended it to be read in association with the preceding two compositions.

Thus I sat mourning, etc., p. 139.—I have seen these two lines objected to as being somewhat ludicrously grotesque. Christina Rossetti did not think any part of the Bible ludicrous, and she found in the prophet Micah, 'I will make a wailing like the dragons, and mourning as the owls.'

Behold, I stand at the Door and Knock, p. 147.—These verses were published in some magazine. I fancy it may have been one named *Aikin's Year*, with which Mary Howitt was connected. If so, I think the publication must be not later than 1854; and these would be (apart from the *Versi*, etc., see p. 446) the first verses by Christina which got into print after the cessation of *The Germ* in 1850.

St. Elizabeth of Hungary, p. 150.—I take it that this lyric received its immediate inspiration from the picture of like subject painted by James Collinson.

A Harvest, p. 153.—In the MS. notebook the title is *Annie*, and the poem extends to twenty stanzas. It then took the form of an address to 'Annie' by a husband or lover; possibly the poignantly pathetic lines of Edgar Poe, *For Annie*, were partly in my sister's mind. At some later date she numbered five out of the twenty stanzas, evidently contemplating to retain those five alone. I follow her lead, and supply a new title. The poem as it originally stood is, however, by no means a bad one.

Sleep at Sea, p. 154.—Was at first named *Something like Truth*.

Some Feasts and Fasts, p. 156.—This general heading continues up to the poem *Sunday before Advent* (p. 179).

Embertide, p. 163.—This poem (from *The Face of the Deep*) takes occasion from the passage of *The Apocalypse*—'And one of the elders saith unto me Weep not.' The prose comment on the passage contains the following: 'What we know with certainty of this beatified elder is not his name, but his Christ-likeness. As once his Master on earth so now he in heaven saith, Weep not. The one and only aspect high or low need desire to be known by is Christ-likeness. Thus the saints are stamped thereby they become recognizable.' And then follows the present poem.

Mid-Lent, p. 164.—This sonnet (from *Time Flies*) is obviously based in some degree upon the other sonnet, *Who have a Form of Godliness*, at p. 156, which was not published by the authoress.

Monday in Holy Week, p. 165.—This short piece was originally entitled *For a Crucifix*. Written in 1853, it was first published in 1885, in *Time Flies*.

Good Friday Morning, p. 166.—This is the only piece which the authoress added to the volume *Verses*, consisting otherwise of reprints from previous volumes.

Ascension Day, p. 170.—To the last two lines in this poem (ending, 'Is that His cloud?') Christina wrote, in a copy of *Time Flies*, the note: 'An idea picked up, I cannot remember where.'

There remaineth therefore a Rest, p. 180.—In the notebook this composition numbers twelve stanzas; two of them under the title *The Bourne*, were eventually published ('Underneath the growing grass,' etc.). The remaining ten were

not unworthy to pair with those two, but I think it best to use only five of them.

Paradise, p. 180.—The first title of this poem was *Easter Even*. In a printed copy of her *Poems*, wherein Christina made a few jottings, she has here noted 'Not a real dream.'

Ye have forgotten the Exhortation, p. 181.—Our father having died on 26 April 1854, it is not unnatural to think that this poem, dated 10 May 1854, bears some direct relation to that loss. There had been two other deaths in the family, April and December 1853—those of our maternal grandparents; to her grandfather especially Christina was most warmly attached. The title, *Ye have forgotten the Exhortation*, standing by itself, does not seem to be specially apposite to this poem. It becomes so when read with its context (*Hebrews* xii. 5, 6): 'And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.'

The World, p. 182.—This is one of Christina Rossetti's most energetic utterances, and a highly characteristic one. She had in fact a great horror of 'the world,' in the sense which that term bears in the New Testament; its power to blur all the great traits of character, to deaden all lofty aims, to clog all the impulses of the soul aspiring to unseen Truth. I recollect her once saying to me with marked emphasis, when my children were past their very earliest years, 'I hope they are not *worldly*.' It is an interesting observation of the great poet Leopardi, in one of his prose writings, that this sense of 'the world' appears to have been entirely unknown to antiquity, and to have formed one of the most potent messages of Jesus Christ. In Christina's sonnet the opposite aspects of the world by day and by night may call for a little reflection. The primary sense (of course subsidiary to some spiritual meaning) appears to be that the world—like other devils, spectres, and hobgoblins—appears *in propriâ personâ* in the night-hours only; it is then that she is recognized for the fiend she actually is.

Zion Said, p. 183.—As in a previous instance, the context makes this heading more significant,—*Isaiah* xlix. 13, 14: 'The Lord hath remembered his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted. But Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me.' This quotation appears in a condensed form in the poem *Christian and Jew* (p. 203).

Hymn after Gabriele Rossetti, p. 183.—In our father's volume of religious poems, *L'Arpa Evangelica* (1852), there is a composition named *Nell' Atto della Comunione*, in three parts. The third begins with the words—'T' amo, e fra dolci affanni,' and is the one which Christina here translates in two separate versions. The date which I give is conjectural; I assume the translation to have been made not long after our father's death. The copy of the *Arpa Evangelica* into which these verses were inserted is profusely illustrated with pencil-designs by Christina.

I will lift up mine Eyes unto the Hills, p. 184.—In MS. the title of this poem (viewed with predilection by its authoress) was *Now they desire a better Country*. It was printed in the *Lyra Eucharistica*, 1864, as *Conference between Christ, the Saints, and the Soul* (this must, I think, have been a title proposed by the editor of the selection); in 1875, under its present title, it was included in Christina's collected *Poems*.

A Christmas Carol for my Godchildren, p. 187.—Christina, from time to time, acted as godmother to various children—

mostly, I think, children of poor people in the neighbourhood of Christ Church, Albany Street, Regent's Park. It may be worth noting that this carol was written not at Christmas time, but early in October; and in many instances a reference to dates would show that poems about festivals of the Church, or about seasons of the year, were written at dates by no means corresponding.

After this the Judgment, p. 188.—This composition in *terza rima*, written immediately after Christina Rossetti had completed her twenty-sixth year, was at first named *In Advent*, and it began with eight *terzine*, evidently prompted by a sense of the waning of early youth, and of melancholy at present and prospective conditions of life. These opening *terzine* had not any distinctly devotional character, and Christina, when she published her poem, excluded them. They are little or not at all less good than the rest of the composition, so I give them separately (p. 328), supplying a title—*Downcast*, for *In Advent* would no longer have any adequate application to them.

Old and New Year Ditties, p. 190.—It will be observed that these three lyrics were written in three several years. They used to be called—(1856) *The End of the Year;* (1858) *New Year's Eve;* (1860) *The Knell of the Year.* I have always regarded this last as the very summit and mountain-top of Christina's work. I will not say, nor indeed think, that nothing besides of hers is equal to it; but I venture to hold that, while she never wrote anything to transcend it in its own line, neither did any one else. The poem depends for its effect on nought save its feeling, sense, and sound; for the verses avoid regularity of the ordinary kind, and there is but one single rhyme throughout. The note is essentially one of triumph, though of triumph through the very grievousness of experience past and present. In framing the section of her *Devotional Poems*, 1875 and 1890, Christina used to put these *Ditties* last, followed only by *Amen* and *The Lowest Place*. In reading them together, it is natural for her brother to reflect whether they indicate any special occurrences in the years to which they relate. I cannot remember that they do—cannot, for instance, say that in 1856 she was in any express sense 'stripped of favourite things she had'; however, the year 1860 (besides being the year of Dante Gabriel's marriage) was that in which Christina, a few days before she wrote *The Knell*, attained the age of thirty, and her thoughts as to the transit of years may have been more than ordinarily solemn. Her reference to her having 'won neither laurel nor bay' has also its interest. The bay began sprouting soon afterwards, with the appearance, in *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1861, of the poem *Up-hill*, which at once commanded a considerable share of public attention. It is quite possible that Christina—the most modest of poets, but by no means wanting in the self-consciousness of poetic faculty—thought in 1860 that the bay had been kept waiting quite long enough; and it is a fact that, between 24 July 1860, the date of *The Lambs of Westmoreland*, and 23 March 1861, the date of *Easter Even*, she wrote no verse whatever except this *Knell of the Year*.

The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness, p. 192.—Few things written by Christina contain more of her innermost self than this. In her volume *Verses* (published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge) she took the first and last stanzas of this vehement utterance, and, altering the metre observably, and the diction not a little, she published them with the title, *Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive* (see p. 194). I think it only right to give the poem in full, as well as the extracted portion of it.

Divers Worlds—Time and Eternity, p. 193.—This series of poems continues up to the verses *For All*. For some

general remarks on the series see the note (p. 468) upon *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

Earth has clear call of daily bells, p. 193.—These two stanzas (first printed in *Time Flies*) are modified from two out of the eight which compose the poem *Yet a Little While* (p. 342). That poem has no connection with a stanza which bears the same title (p. 193).

Whatsoever is right, that shall ye receive, p. 194.—See the note (p. 472) to *The Heart knoweth its own Bitterness*.

'Was Thy Wrath against the Sea?' p. 195.—These lines from *The Face of the Deep* relate to the text, 'There was no more sea,' after the creation of 'a new heaven and a new earth.' This text dwelt much in Christina's mind, and prompted various allusions in her writings.

And there was no more Sea, p. 195.—See the preceding note. Notwithstanding the title which the present piece bears in the volume *Verses*, it comes in *The Face of the Deep* in connection with a very different passage of *The Apocalypse*—'And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour and glory and power be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.'

Roses on a brier, p. 196.—Another variation on the same theme. It comes from *Time Flies*, being the entry (without any associated prose) for 9 June.

Then whose shall those things be? p. 197.—These lines, published in *Time Flies*, are extracted (with a slight verbal change) from *A Burden* (see p. 205).

Parting after parting, p. 200.—This little poem is made up from two separate stanzas first published in *Time Flies*. Stanza 1 forms the entry for 30 May; stanza 2 belongs to 10 August, and in *Time Flies* it relates to the parting and reunion of two martyrs—Laurence and Pope Sixtus. Stanza 1 (ten lines) is condensed from fourteen lines, named *Good-bye*, which were written on 15 June 1858, and (as marked in the MS. notebook) 'in the train from Newcastle.' This implies that Christina was then 'parting' from her friends the Bell Scotts of Newcastle, and, her visit being then terminated, was returning home to London. It will thus be seen that the intensity of feeling here expressed really originated in a very slight occurrence—the occurrence itself merely served the poet's turn as a suggestion of highly serious matters. Stanza 2 used to be the conclusion of the lyric *Meeting*, written on 11 June 1864 (see p. 366).

Advent, p. 202.—In the annotated copy of her *Poems* Christina wrote against this one: 'Liked, I believe, at East Grinstead'—which one may well credit of the 'Wise Virgins' of that establishment. The greater part was set to music for Christina's funeral service at Christ Church, Woburn Square, by the organist, Mr. Lowden. I heard the music sung, and can testify to its beautiful and touching effect.

Only Believe, p. 205.—There were originally some other lines concluding this poem. They appear under the title *What good shall my Life do me?* (p. 215).

New Jerusalem and its Citizens, p. 206.—This heading (from the *Verses*, 1893) extends on to the poem just aforenamed, *What good shall my Life do me?*

Who is this that cometh up not alone? p. 207.—In a copy of *Time Flies* I find the following note by my sister: 'These lines were suggested by a sermon I heard from the Rev. Marshall Turner in Christ Church, Woburn Square.'

Antipas, p. 208.—This poem (which comes from *The Face of the Deep*) is founded upon those words which, in *The Apocalypse*, Christ speaks in addressing the church of Pergamos: 'Thou hast not denied my faith, even in those days

wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you.' And in the prose commentary Christina said: 'Men know him not now, how he lived or how he died. God alone knows him. Enough for blessed Antipas.'

As cold waters to a thirsty soul, etc., p. 209.—These three stanzas are partly identical with the five stanzas which compose *A Shadow of Dorothea* (p. 216). The present three, having been published by my sister, cannot here be omitted. I think it would be a pity to omit the other five, and they therefore figure in our pages as well.

'*Our Mothers*, etc.,' p. 214.—Christina evidently associates together, in the *New Jerusalem* series, this piece and the following one, as having a bearing personal to herself. They both come from *The Face of the Deep*, but from very different contexts there.

Is it well with the Child? p. 214.—This small lyric appeared in *Time Flies*, as being related to the martyrdom of St. Faith (supposed to be 'a noble maiden of Aquitain' in the third century). Her feast is 6 October. The verses formed originally a part of a longer composition named *Young Death*—date, 3 November 1865—and obviously relating to some very youthful person known to the authoress. Who this may have been I cannot now say. The portion of *Young Death* which was not included in the *Verses* has thus a certain personal interest. It is marked by a union of devoutness with quaint *naïveté* characteristic of Christina's verse in some moods; and, as I should not wish the lines to be totally lost, I give them separately under their proper date and title (see p. 244).

What good shall my life do me? p. 215.—See the note (p. 473) on *Only Believe*.

A Shadow of Dorothea, p. 216.—I do not find in the legend of St. Dorothea any incident corresponding closely to this. I understand that, in the poem, the speaker is a human soul, not as yet confirmed in saintliness, appealing to the flower-bearing Angel of the legend, or rather indeed to the Saviour Christ. See the note above on the poem *As Cold Waters*, etc.

For Henrietta Polydore, p. 217.—Christina's title only says 'H. P.,' but the lines are certainly intended for Henrietta Polydore, our cousin (see note to p. 421). She was born in England and brought up a Roman Catholic. By a curious train of circumstances she was at one time, while still a child, in Salt Lake City with the Mormons. Her father recovered her thence, at a time when a military expedition was sent by the Federal Government to control affairs in the Territory of Utah; and the present lines were presumably written by Christina when she heard that her youthful cousin was about to re-embark for England.

Ash Wednesday, p. 217.—These verses—bearing no title beyond *Jesus, do I love Thee?*—were printed in the *Lyra Eucharistica*, 1864. *Ash Wednesday* is the authoress's own title in her MS. notebook; I retain it, as the lines were evidently written towards the date of that fast. Preceding the last quatrain, the MS. gives six verses of ecstatic religious appeal which, as they were not printed, I with some hesitation omit.

A Christmas Carol, p. 217.—This was in the *Lyra Messianica*, 1865, named simply *Before the paling of the stars*. I retain my sister's own title.

Christ our All in All, p. 218.—This general heading continues up to the poem *The Chiefest among Ten Thousand* (p. 232). See the note (p. 468) to *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

An exceeding bitter cry, p. 218.—The phrase 'too late for rising from the dead' may ask a word of explanation. The poem comes from *The Face of the Deep*, and relates to Christ's address to the Church of Sardis, in which occur the

words, 'Thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.'

Thy Friend and thy Father's Friend forget not, p. 226.—This poem is based upon one which was written as far back as 26 August 1859, entitled *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another*. The printed version is the shorter of the two, and is modified throughout, the closing lines being quite different.

'*And now why tarriest thou?*' p. 228.—This was set to music (like *Advent*—see the note on p. 473) by Mr. Frank Lowden, and was sung at Christina's funeral service.

Within the Veil, p. 234.—From the *Lyra Messianica*. These verses would seem to refer to the recent death of some religious and cherished young friend; I cannot say who it was. In MS. the title of the verses is *One Day*.

For a Mercy Received, p. 235.—I am unable to say what the 'mercy' was.

The Lowest Place, p. 237.—As an expression of her permanent attitude of mind in the region of faith and hope, Christina evidently laid some stress on this little poem. She made it the concluding piece in the *Prince's Progress* volume, and also in the combined form of that volume with the *Goblin Market* one. Hence I thought the second stanza of this poem the most appropriate thing that I could get inscribed upon her tombstone in 1895. In the sequence of compositions in her MS. notebook there is nothing to show any exceptional degree of devout absorption towards this date. *The Lowest Place* bears the same date as *The Ghost's Petition*, and comes immediately after the sunny playful-minded *Maiden Song*.

Come unto Me, p. 237.—This is the title given to the sonnet when first published in the *Lyra Eucharistica;* in MS. it stands as *Faint yet Pursuing*. It belongs to a knot of pieces showing some dejection and self-reproach, from 20 January to March 1864. The next following lyrics, *Patience* and *Easter*, have a less disconsolate tone. The other pieces in question are *Beauty is vain*, *What would I give? Who shall deliver me?*

By the Waters of Babylon, p. 239.—*In Captivity* was the first name of this forcible piece of *terza rima*.

Despised and Rejected, p. 241.—The point of view in this poem is rather remarkable. To some extent it pairs with the earlier composition (p. 147), *Behold I stand at the Door and Knock*. That, however, is obviously addressed to the prosperous and callous—the Dives who will not take count of Lazarus. Here we have a different situation. The supposed speaker is clearly a person who has been rather hardly treated by the world, and who determines that henceforth he will be left alone. The message addressed to him is: 'Whatever you exclude, through condonable disgust with the world and its ways, don't exclude Christ, nor yet the poor and suffering, who are Christ's representatives here.' Thus the poem bears some faint analogy (yet not the least resemblance) to *The Poet's Vow* of Mrs. Browning.

Birds of Paradise, p. 242.—This was printed in *Lyra Messianica*, under the title *Paradise in a Symbol*. In that volume the substituted title is appropriate, because another poem by Christina is there, named *Paradise in a Dream* ('Once in a dream I saw the flowers,' etc., see p. 180). For the present poem her own title in MS. was *Birds of Paradise*, which I prefer to retain here. In the MS. the last line of stanza one stands 'Windy-winged they came.' I reproduce the printed phrase, yet am sorry to lose the written one.

I know you not, p. 243.—From *Lyra Messianica*. Date conjectural.

Young Death, p. 244.—This is only a portion of the poem, as first written. See the note (p. 474) on *Is it well with the Child?* The gaps left by the extrac-

tion of the latter lyric are indicated here by asterisks.

A Christmas Carol, p. 246. This was first published in *Scribner's Monthly*, January 1872. It was republished, 1875, in the volume of united poems, being then made to open the series of Devotional Poems.

Wrestling, p. 247.—This is the introductory poem to Christina Rossetti's volume of prayers named *Annus Domini*, published by Messrs. James Parker and Co. in 1874. It had not hitherto been reproduced in any volume of her poems. In *Annus Domini* the composition stands untitled. I supply a title of my own. Stanza 7 was not printed in *Annus Domini*. Christina (as notified in Mr. Mackenzie Bell's book) wrote it afterwards, and I find it in the copy which she inscribed to our mother for her birthday, 27 April 1874.

The Master is come and calleth for Thee, p. 248. — In the annotated copy of Christina's poems I find a note as follows: 'Dr. Littledale wanted a hymn—for a "Profession," I think; so I wrote this. But I think it was not adopted.'

Saints and Angels, p. 249.—On this poem Christina made a rather quaint note, personal to myself: 'William aptly remarked that this contains nothing about angels.'

A Rose Plant in Jericho, p. 250.—This sweet little poem has (it would seem) less of personal intensity of emotion than a reader might surmise from its terms. It stands annotated by Christina thus: 'Written once when Mr. Shipley wanted something' (the Rev. Orby Shipley, who edited more than one volume of devotional verse). The precise bearing of the title is not clear to me.

Patience of Hope, p. 250.—This comes from *The Children's Hymn-book*, edited by Mrs. Carey Brock, Bishop How, and others, and published by Messrs. Rivington. The date of publication appears to be 1881, and I therefore date this poem '*circa* 1880.' The words are set to be sung to the tune 'Grasmere' by Mr. Cameron W. H. Brock. In *The Children's Hymn-book* the composition was named *Thou art the same, and Thy Years shall not fail:* when it was reprinted in the volume of 1891, the present title was substituted.

I will Arise, p. 251.—To this and some other poems I give the date 'before 1882,' on the ground that they were published in the *Pageant* volume, 1881.

'*Behold, a Shaking*,' p. 255.—The first of these two sonnets is an evident recasting of the third sonnet in the series (p. 384), named *By Way of Remembrance*. I much prefer that third sonnet. It was not published by Christina herself, and I give both forms of the composition.

Why? p. 260.—It will be seen that this sonnet bears some relation to another sonnet, *If only* (p. 244), and to the lyric, *When my heart is vexed I will complain* (p. 248).

If thou sayest, etc., p. 261.—The whole context may as well be quoted here: 'If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain; if thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not He that pondereth the heart consider it? and He that keepeth thy soul, doth not He know it?'

A Sick Child's Meditation, p. 263.—Comes from a little Church serial named *New and Old*.

Out of the Deep have I called unto Thee, O Lord, p. 264.—This section of the *Verses* continues on to the sonnet, *Light of Light*. See the note (p. 468) to *Songs for Strangers and Pilgrims*.

Gifts and Graces, p. 270.—Continues on to the verses which begin, '*Lord, grant us grace to rest upon Thy word*.'

Christmas Carols, p. 278.—It is reasonable to suppose that these three carols were written in different years.

I am not aware of the correct dates. The first carol was published (in *The Century-Guild Hobby-horse*) in 1887, and so I give a general date, '*circa* 1887.'

A Hope Carol, p. 280.—I give here the date 'before 1889,' on the ground that the verses were first published in *The Century-Guild Hobby-horse*, 1888.

Yea I have a Goodly Heritage, p. 280.—As to the date, I only know that this was published in October 1890 (in *Atalanta*).

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary: a Song for all Maries, p. 281.—Perhaps the authoress meant something special by the sub-title. She may have been thinking of her mother's second name Mary, and her sister's name Maria.

A Death of a First-born, p. 282.—Relates to the death of the Duke of Clarence and Avondale.

Faint yet Pursuing, p. 282.—These sonnets were published in *Literary Opinion*, April 1892. Date conjectural.

The World—Self-destruction, p. 283.—This series of poems, lasting up to the lines which begin, 'Toll, bell, toll,' come from *The Face of the Deep*, reprinted in the *Verses*, 1893.

All Things, p. 285.—This short piece belongs also to *The Face of the Deep*. I have given a title, for clearness' sake. My sister did not reproduce the piece in the *Verses* of 1893. I cannot discern any reason for the omission, unless it be that she thought the lines too brief to hold their place in that volume.

Heaven Overarches, p. 286.—When I was looking through my sister's effects, shortly after her death in 1894, I found these verses rather roughly written in a little memorandum-book. Their date must, I think, be as late as 1893. Except *Good Friday Morning* (p. 166) and *Sleeping at Last* (p. 417), they appear to be about the last lines produced by my sister.

A Portrait, p. 286.—The reader will observe that the second of these two sonnets belongs, in point of date, to the *Juvenilia*. It was written for the death of Lady Isabella Howard. See the note (p. 467) upon *Lady Isabella*. The sonnet which here stands first was meant for Saint Elizabeth of Hungary, and was so entitled; Christina had before then read with interest Kingsley's drama, *The Saint's Tragedy*. The name *A Portrait* is intended, I assume, to reidentify the brace of sonnets with Lady Isabella Howard. I question, however, whether some of the stronger expressions in the first sonnet are wholly applicable to this young lady.

Three Stages, p. 288.—This triple poem was written, as the reader will perceive, at three very different dates, ranging between 1848 and 1854. The first section was originally named *Lines in Memory of Schiller's Der Pilgrim;* but, when published by my sister, it received the altered title, *A Pause of Thought*. She did not see fit to publish sections 2 and 3; not, I am convinced, that she thought them below the mark, but because of their intimately personal character. I published them in the volume of *New Poems*, keeping them separate, and naming No. 3 *Restive*. As I mentioned at that time, I think the proper ultimate treatment for the three sections is to keep them united, as Christina herself united them in MS.; and this I now effect.

Lady Montrevor, p. 290.—This sonnet applies to a personage in Maturin's novel, *The Wild Irish Boy*. Christina, as well as her brothers, was in early youth very fond of Maturin's novels, and more than one of her poems relate to these. Lady Montrevor is possibly now almost forgotten. She is a brilliant woman of the world who fascinates 'the Wild Irish Boy,' and leads both him and herself into grave dilemmas.

Song ('When I am dead, my dearest'), p. 290.—This celebrated lyric (which has perhaps been oftener quoted, and

certainly oftener set to music, than anything else by Christina Rossetti) was, except for one composition, her only production in December 1848. The other, so far from being of any the like calibre, is so indifferent that it has never been published: it bears the rather odd title, *What Sappho would have said, had her leap cured instead of killing her*—and its date is 7 December 1848. The next poem after *When I am dead* is the *Symbols*, 7 January 1849 (p. 116). The reader may perhaps not object to see here a few particulars about musical settings of Christina's works. *Goblin Market* and *Songs in a Cornfield* are referred to in other notes; also some composed by Mr. Lowden. I myself possess musical settings as follows, but no doubt there are several others. *When I am Dead*, by Mary Carmichael and ten other composers; five from *Singsong*, by Mary Carmichael, and four by Schlesinger; *Up-hill*, four settings; *A Birthday* and *Bird Raptures*, two each; *Hope is like a Harebell; First Spring Day; If; The Skylark; Dreamland; A Summer Wish; Echo*, by Virginia Gabriel; *Yea or Nay; I bore with Thee; Advent; Two Doves.*

An End, p. 292.—This is one of the poems published in *The Germ*, 1850. The others were—*Dreamland*, *A Pause of Thought*, *Song* (Oh roses for the flush of youth), *A Testimony*, *Repining*, and *Sweet Death*.

Dream land, p. 292.—Christina made three coloured designs to this lyric. In the first we see the 'She' of the poem journeying to her bourne. She is a rather sepulchral-looking, white-clad figure, holding a cross; the 'single star' and the 'water-springs' are apparent, also a steep slope of purplish hill which she is leaving behind. The second design gives the nightingale singing on a thorny rose-bough. In the third, 'She' is rising and ascending winged; her pinions are golden, of butterfly-form.

Looking Forward, p. 293.—The tone of this lyric suggests that it was written in expectation of seemingly imminent death; in the MS. notebook it stands in my mother's handwriting (quite contrary to wont), and so does another poem, dated in the same month, *One Certainty* (p. 119).

Queen Rose, p. 295.—Christina sang often—possibly too often—the praises of the rose; she regarded it not merely in its own beauty, but as the symbol of love, whether construed as deep human affection or as union with the Divine. The lily stood with her (as with so many another) for faith.

Endurance, p. 297.—This sonnet does not appear in Christina's MS. note-books. It was inserted into the prose tale *Maude* (published in 1897) as being a morbid effusion of 'Maude.' As the MS. of that tale was done in 1850, I presume that the sonnet may have been written towards that date. It is not very good, but could scarcely (I think) be omitted here. The same remarks (save as to demerit) apply to the next ensuing lyric, *Withering*. In both cases the titles are mine.

Twilight Calm, p. 297.—This poem looks like a direct transcript from nature, as if the authoress had observed the particular features of the scene one by one, and had noted them down at the moment. And yet it cannot have been so; unless indeed one supposes that it was mainly written at one season, and only concluded at another. Its recorded date, 7 February, is inconsistent with several of the details described—bees, leafy wood, lilies and roses shutting, etc.

Is and Was, p. 300.—The last line of this poem, 'Doing all from self-respect,' may be worth a moment's comment. Much about the time when the poem was written, a lady told my sister that the latter seemed to 'do all from self-respect,' not from fellow-feeling with others, or from kindly consideration for them. Christina mentioned the remark with an admission that it hit a blot in

her character, in which a certain amount of reserve and distance, not remote from *hauteur*, was certainly at that date perceptible. She laid the hint to heart, and, I think, never forgot it. A like phrase appears in a poem of much later date, July 1865, *Enrica* (see p. 377).

Annie, p. 301.—Christina, the most scrupulous of women and of writers, put to this lyric a note—'query Borrows.' She meant that there may, or possibly may not, be here some unconscious reminiscences from other poems.

Books in the Running Brooks, p. 303.—This, in MS., stands entitled *After a Picture in the Portland Gallery*. What this picture may have been I cannot now say; not one by Dante Rossetti, who did not exhibit in that gallery after 1850.

To what purpose is this Waste? p. 305.—The reader will observe, on p. 132, the composition, *These all wait upon Thee*, extracted with modified diction from the present poem.

Next of Kin, p. 307.—This might appear to be a personal address to some very youthful relative; if so, it can only be intended for the 'Lalla' named on p. 421, for Christina had no other relative younger than herself. But perhaps no personal reference is really intended.

For Rosaline's Album, p. 307.—Rosaline was Miss Orme, who, not long after the date of these verses, married Professor David Masson, now King's Historiographer for Scotland. These sepulchral verses are perhaps not quite the staple for a very youthful (and I might add charming) lady's album.

Dead before Death, p. 313.—I am unable to say what gave rise to this very intense and denunciatory outpouring. It was written three days before the authoress completed her twenty-fourth year; and possibly it may be regarded as an address to herself—not indeed as she was, or even supposed herself to be, but as she might become if 'Amor Mundi' were to supersede the aspiration after divine grace.

The First Spring Day, p. 314.—In a copy of her *Poems*, 1875, Christina made the following note: 'I was walking in the Outer Circle, Regent's Park, when the impulse or thought came.'

My Dream, p. 315.—If anything were needed to show the exceptional turn of mind of Christina Rossetti—the odd freakishness which flecked the extreme and almost excessive seriousness of her thought—the present poem might serve for the purpose. It looks like the narration of a true dream; and nothing seems as if it could account for so eccentric a train of notions, except that she in fact dreamed them. And yet she did not; for, in a copy of her collected edition of 1875, I find that she has marked the piece 'not a real dream.' As it was not a real dream, and she chose nevertheless to give it verbal form, one seeks for a meaning in it, and I for one cannot find any that bears development. She certainly liked the poem, and in this I and others quite agreed with her; I possess a little bit of paper, containing three illustrations of her own to *The Dream*, and bearing the date 16 March '55. There is (1) the dreamer slumbering under a tree, from which the monarch crocodile dangles; (2) the crocodile sleeping with 'unstrung claw,' as the 'winged vessel' approaches; and (3) the crocodile as he reared up in front of the vessel, and 'wrung his hands.' I may add that, for some reason as untraceable perhaps as that which guided Christina in the writing of *The Dream*, Dante Gabriel bestowed the name of 'the prudent crocodile' (from this poem) upon Mr. William Morris, and the nickname found favour with some other members of our circle. Perhaps it will one day turn up in correspondence, and will remain unfathomable to persons who do not read this note.

I have a Message unto Thee, p. 316.—After the sixth stanza of this poem came

two other stanzas here omitted. My sister used them, with slight verbal alterations, as a separate composition, *The Flowers appear on the Earth* (see p. 135).

To the End, p. 319.—The last quatrain of this poem seems to present a certain reminiscence (yet far from being a plagiarism) from Dante Rossetti's early achievement, *The Blessed Damozel*.

Shut Out, p. 320.—In MS. this piece bears the too significant title, *What happened to Me*.

Acme, p. 323.—In point of sentiment, not at all in the form of treatment, this sonnet bears some analogy to one by Dante Rossetti, *A Superscription*. The latter was written in January 1869, long after Christina's sonnet: the resemblance must be fortuitous.

Look on this Picture and on This, p. 323.—In my sister's MS. this poem is a rather long one, forty-six triplets; I have reduced it to twenty-three—omitting those passages which appear to me to be either in themselves inferior, or adapted rather for spinning out the theme than intensifying it. Longer or shorter, the poem is perhaps hardly up to the writer's mark; but there is a degree of peculiarity about it which disinclines me to drop it out. Were it not for the name 'Eva,' I should be embarrassed to guess what could have directed my sister's pen to so singular a subject and treatment; but that name satisfies me that she was here recurring to a favourite romancist of her girlhood, Maturin (see note to p. 107). In Maturin's novel entitled *Women* there is a personage Eva, and a situation which must certainly have prompted the present poem.

Downcast, p. 328.—This is in strictness a fragment, and its full rhyme-system, as *terza rima*, is necessarily uncompleted. See the note (p. 472) to *After this the Judgment*.

A Triad, p. 329.—This very fine sonnet was published in the volume of 1862, *Goblin Market and other Poems* but was omitted in subsequent issues. I presume that my sister, with over strained scrupulosity, considered its mora tone to be somewhat open to exception In such a view I by no means agree, and I therefore reproduce it here, as I did in the volume of *New Poems*, 1896.

Love from the North, p. 329.—Was originally named *In the Days of the Sea-Kings*, which is perhaps the better title of the two.

In an Artist's Studio, p. 330.—The reference is apparently to our brother's studio, and to his constantly-repeated heads of the lady whom he afterwards married, Miss Siddal.

In the Round Tower at Jhansi, p. 332.—On hearing this tragic episode of the Indian Mutiny, my sister composed the poem, which I always rate among her masterpieces; and she published it in the *Goblin Market* volume, 1862. In a subsequent reissue she added the following note: 'I retain this little poem, not as historically accurate, but as written and published before I heard the supposed facts of its first verse contradicted.' In that copy of the *Goblin Market* volume in which Christina drew a few coloured designs, she has put a head- and tail-piece to the Jhansi poem. The former is a flag displayed—pink field, with a device of two caressing doves. The latter is the same flag, drooping from its broken staff, and seen on the reverse side, besmeared with blood.

A Nightmare (*Fragment*), p. 333.—In my sister's note-book this composition begins on p. 25, and ends on p. 27; the intermediate leaf has been torn out. Mere scrap as it is, I should be sorry to lose it quite.

For One Sake, p. 333.—The precise bearing of this sonnet may admit of some uncertainty. It would seem that some woman known to the authoress (I cannot at all say who it was) had died, and was regarded by her as now a saint in heaven,

the 'imperishable bride' of Christ. Or possibly the 'imperishable bride' is the Christian Church in the abstract. The phrase as to 'wars and rumours of your wars' seems to be anything but germane to such a theme. The war of the Indian Mutiny was then raging; and it may be that the writer intended to express the opinion—which she certainly entertained—that any such turmoil is a very little thing, in comparison with the question whether the human soul is to be saved or lost to all eternity.

Memory, p. 334.—It will be observed that this remarkable utterance is made up of two separate poems, written at a rather wide interval of dates. No. 1 was originally named *A Blank;* No. 2, *A Memory*.

A Birthday, p. 335.—I have more then once been asked whether I could account for the outburst of exuberant joy evidenced in this celebrated lyric; I am unable to do so. Its correct sequence is shown in these pages, between Part I. of *Memory* and *An Apple Gathering*—poems neither of which is at all in the like strain. It is, of course, possible to infer that the *Birthday* is a mere piece of poetical composition, not testifying to any corresponding emotion of its author at the time; but I am hardly prepared to think that.—In some illustrated comic paper a parody of the lyric was printed; it amused Christina, who pasted it into a copy of her *Poems*, 1875. It may perhaps amuse other people, and I give it here:—

AN UNEXPECTED PLEASURE
(*After Christina G. Rossetti*)

My heart is like one asked to dine
Whose evening dress is up the spout;
My heart is like a man would be
Whose raging tooth is half pulled out.
My heart is like a howling swell
Who boggles on his upper C;
My heart is madder than all these—
My wife's mamma has come to tea.

Raise me a bump upon my crown,
Bang it till green in purple dies;
Feed me on bombs and fulminates,
And turncocks of a medium size.

Work me a suit in crimson apes
And sky-blue beetles on the spree;
Because the mother of my wife
Has come—and means to stay with me.

Winter, My Secret, p. 336.—This was at first named *Nonsense;* but, if there is method in some madness, there may be nous in some nonsense.

My Friend, p. 336.—One can scarcely doubt that this refers to the death of some person known to and beloved by the writer. Perhaps at one time I knew who it was, but do not now.

Maude Clare, p. 337.—This poem was originally much longer than it is now. It numbered forty-three stanzas or thereabouts (there is a gap in the MS. note-book just before its close). It was first published in *Once a Week*, 5 November 1859, with a design by Millais—far from being among his best. There were then sixteen stanzas—now only twelve. I am not sure that the omission of the opening stanza was an advantage; here it is:—

The fields were white with lily-buds,
White gleamed the lilied beck;
Each mated pigeon plumed the pomp
Of his metallic neck.

Autumn, p. 337.—Was at first entitled *Ding Dong Bell*.

Up-hill, p. 339.—This was, I believe, the first poem by Christina which excited marked attention; it was published in *Macmillan's Magazine* for February 1861, and was at once accepted by poetical readers as an observable thing. The like had, in its small degree, been the case with the verses printed in *The Germ;* but then *The Germ* had next to no circulation.

At Home, p. 339.—Was originally called *After the Picnic*, and was written (as a pencil-note by the authoress says) 'after a Newcastle picnic,' which must no doubt have been held in company with the Bell Scotts. This, however, was a trivial title, to which my brother raised some objection. He considered

this to be about the best of all Christina's poems, and was not (I conceive) far wrong, though there are others equally good. It will be perceived that 29 June 1858 was a red-letter day in Christina's poetic calendar. She produced on that day (or else she simply completed) *Uphill*, *At Home*, and the ensuing *To-day and To-morrow*, which, though left unpublished during her lifetime, appears to me only a trifle less masterly than the other two. She illustrated *At Home* with two coloured designs, which, inefficiently done as they are, carry a certain imaginative suggestion with them. No. 1 shows the blanched form of the ghost in a sky lit with cresset flames. On one side the sky is bright blue, the flames golden; on the other side, dark twilight grey, and the flames red. No. 2 is the globe of the earth, rudely lined for latitude and longitude. The equator divides it into a green northern and a grey-purple southern hemisphere. Over the former flare sunbeams in a blue sky; below the latter the firmament is dimly dark, and the pallid moon grey towards extinction.

The Convent Threshold, p. 340.—The authoress seems to have combined in this impassioned poem something of the idea of an Héloïse and Abélard with something of the idea of a Juliet and Romeo. The opening lines, *There's blood between us*, etc., clearly point to a family feud, as of the Capulets and Montagues; but it is difficult to believe that the passage beginning 'A spirit with transfigured face' would have been introduced unless the writer had had in her mind some personage, such as Abélard, of exceptionally subtle and searching intellect. It may be observed moreover that (as with the letters of Héloïse to Abélard) this seems to be intended for a written outpouring, not a spoken one: see the line on p. 342, 'I cannot write the words I said.'

Yet a Little While, p. 342.—Stanzas 3, 4, 7, and 8 are used, with modifications, in other poems; the first pair in *Vanity of Vanities* (p. 133), and the second pair in the opening lyric (p. 193) of *Divers Worlds*, *Time and Eternity*. Nevertheless I have thought it undesirable to cut them out of the present poem.

Father and Lover, p. 343.—These two songs—the first spoken by the Father, and the second by the Lover—come from a prose fairy-tale named *Hero*, which was printed in the volume entitled *Commonplace and Other Stories*, 1870—long out of print. I am not sure as to when my sister wrote *Hero*; it was before 1866, and I think some years before.

By the Sea, p. 343.—This lyric of three stanzas was taken out of one of six stanzas, named *A Yawn*. The longer poem has a much more decided personal note in it.

Winter Rain, p. 344.—There is hardly any poem by my sister, other than this, evincing a certain pleasure in the phenomena of winter. She was rather lavish of her coloured illustrations to it, giving no less than four. These are the 'bower of love for birds,' and the 'canopy above nest and egg and mother,' and the 'meadow-grass pied with broad-eyed daisies,' and the lilies on land and water.

L. E. L., p. 344.—This poem was at first entitled *Spring*, and a note was put to the title, '*L. E. L.* by E. B. B.' The note must refer to Mrs. Browning's poem named *L. E. L.'s Last Question*; but it is not entirely clear what relation Christina meant to indicate between that poem and her own *Spring*. Apparently she relied either upon L. E. L.'s phrase, which was, 'Do you think of me as I think of you?'—or else upon a phrase occurring in Mrs. Browning's lyric, 'One thirsty for a little love.' It will be clear to most readers that Christina's poem *Spring* relates to herself, and not at all to the poetess L. E. L. (Letitia Elizabeth Landon). I suppose that, when the publishing-stage came on, Christina preferred to retire behind a

cloud, and so renamed the poem *L. E. L.*, as if it were intended to express emotions proper to that now perhaps unduly forgotten poetess. The poem, as it stands in my sister's MS. note-book, has lines 1 and 3 of each stanza unrhymed, and she has pencilled a note thus: 'Gabriel fitted the double rhymes as printed, with a brotherly request that I would use them'; and elsewhere she adds, 'greatly improving the piece.' In other respects the printed *L. E. L.* is nearly identical with the MS. *Spring*.

Spring, p. 345.—In that copy of the *Goblin Market* volume to which Christina supplied some coloured designs, this poem (printed on p. 51) is the latest, in order of pagination, to be thus distinguished. Her illustration is rather curious: it applies to the line 'Life nursed in its grave by Death.' We see Death, a white and sufficiently 'bogyfied' personage, holding on her lap a motionless female form, with yellow hair and pink drapery. A markedly leafless tree rises above the group.

Cousin Kate, p. 347.—Like *A Triad* (see the note on p. 480), this poem was published by my sister in a volume, but withdrawn in subsequent issues. The like was the case with the ensuing poem, *Sister Maude*, which seems to show a certain reminiscence from Tennyson's composition, *The Sisters*.

No, thank you, John, p. 349.—In the copy of my sister's combined *Poems* (1875), in which she made a few jottings, I find this rather amusing entry: 'The original John was obnoxious, because he never gave scope for "No, thank you."' I think I understand who John was; he dated, so far as my sister was affected, at a period some years prior to 1860.

The Lambs of Grasmere, p. 350.—In the above-named copy of the *Poems* Christina has written of the lambs, 'Mrs. Ruxton talked about them.' I still remember the occasion well. Mrs. Ruxton (the 'Mary Minto' mentioned in a published letter of Mrs. Browning) was married to a retired captain in the army, and for a brief while they lived at Grasmere. She was a lady of very dignified character and aspect, whom my sister both liked and respected in no common degree.

Wife to Husband, p. 351.—I am not aware that this poem has any individual application. If any, it might perhaps be to my brother's wife, whose constant and severe ill-health permitted no expectation of her living long. Her death took place in February 1862.

Better So, p. 351.—This poem consisted at first of six stanzas. The 3rd, 4th, and 6th, were extracted by my sister, and, with some modification of diction and metre, were published in *Time Flies*, and in the *Verses* of 1893. The remaining three stanzas seem to me to be of much the same degree of merit; they are complete enough in themselves, so I publish them here. It seems probable that the whole poem was written upon the death of some cherished friend; I do not remember who it was. The date is not consistent with any death in our own family. The next poem relates of course to the decease of the Prince Consort. It might be possible (not, I think, probable) to suppose that Christina wrote the present lines as an appropriate utterance for 'Our Widowed Queen.' The Prince indeed died on 14 (not 13) December, but on the 13th his death was clearly anticipated.

In Progress, p. 352.—The expressions in this sonnet, if used by some one else, might have been not far from apposite to Christina herself. I do not, however, consider that she wrote the verses with any such reference. Clearly the sonnet describes some particular person; I can think of two ladies not wholly unlike this touching portrait—one more especially whom Christina first knew in Newcastle-on-Tyne. But any such guess may be quite wrong.

Seasons, p. 354.—These lines show

a shrinking from winter-time, apparent in several other compositions. Italian blood may partly account for this; yet, after all, there is plenty of beauty in an ordinary winter, English or other, and the sensations of an invalid (troubled up to early middle age with many symptoms which seemed to point towards consumption) may have had more to do with the feeling.

A Ring Posy, p. 354.—Was published in the *Prince's Progress* volume, but omitted by the authoress from later reprints. Possibly she thought the poem to be marked by an unchristian shade of self-complacency.

A Year's Windfalls, p. 355.—A note written by my sister says, 'This was written for the Portfolio Society.' I have not any distinct recollection about this Society; possibly Mrs. Bell Scott had something to do with it.

Twilight Night, p. 359. Part 2 of this compound poem was the earlier written. Part 1 formed at first a chaunt in *Songs in a Cornfield:* see the note below to that poem.

What would I Give! p. 363.—In the sequence of dates there is evidence of a period of spiritual depression and self-reproof. The present poem is followed immediately by *Come unto Me* (which was originally called *Faint yet Pursuing*) (p. 237), and *Who shall Deliver Me* and *In Patience* (p. 238). The last-named is dated 19 March; next comes *Easter*, 9 April. The *Come unto Me*, though in a different metrical form, may almost be regarded as continuous with *What would I Give.*

The Ghost's Petition, p. 364.—Used to be called *A Return*, and had four concluding stanzas following the twenty-five which stand in print. Possibly they are better out; but several readers may have felt a certain abruptness in the present termination. In a copy of Christina's *Poems*, 1875, I find that she has altered line 1 of stanza 5 thus—'Sleep, sister, and wake again.' This alteration, however, does not appear in print in any later edition; and being uncertain as to the date when it was written, I leave it aside. My own preference is for the original line.

Hoping against Hope, p. 365.—This was published in *The Argosy*, March 1866, under the title *If.* It was afterwards reprinted with the title which I give, sanctioned (I presume) by my sister. Mr. Frederick A. Sandys made a very able design to it, engraved on wood; able, but (to my thinking) not in character with the poem.

A Sketch, p. 368.—These humorous verses (I am perfectly convinced, though their authoress never enlightened me on the subject) relate to a matter which was from the first highly serious to her, and became hardly less than tragic. It is clear to me that the person here bantered was Charles Bagot Cayley, a man eminently unpractical in habit of mind, and abstracted and wool-gathering in demeanour. It is equally clear that, by the date when the verses were written, August 1864, Christina, though the least forward of women, had evinced towards him an amount of graciousness which a man of ordinary alertness would not have overlooked. This *Sketch* might apparently be interpolated, by a reader of *Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente*, between Nos. 2 and 3 of that series.

Songs in a Cornfield, p. 369.—In this pathetic poem the names of the singers were at first Lettice, Marian, May, and Janet. Afterwards Marian was turned into Rachel, and Janet into Marian. The original Marian (now Rachel) sang the second song; but this was a different lyric—the one which now forms No. 1 in *Twilight Night.* Also there were a dozen concluding lines to the whole poem, left out in printing. *Songs in a Cornfield* was set to music by Sir G. A. Macfarren as a cantata, which was performed more than once. To me the

music appeared truly beautiful; but I believe it did not take much with the public, perhaps because of its extremely melancholy tone at the close. I sometimes fancied that, to avoid this objection, a judicious move would have been to place the swallow-song last in the cantata.

Hear an unked strain, etc., p. 372.—I suppose this provincial word 'unked' (or unkid) is familiar to several readers: it stands for 'grim, uncanny, dismal.' My sister got hold of it thus. Our uncle Henry Polydore told us (possibly in some such remote year as 1840) that the old country-woman with whom he was lodging used to keep a brief diary; and he had noticed that the entry made in it for one night of unusual storm was, 'Oh what an unkid night!' This may have been in Buckinghamshire, or perhaps in Gloucestershire. The small anecdote amused us all in its way, and the phrase became a sort of catchword among us, and, when the occasion offered, Christina enshrined the word in a poem.

Amor Mundi, p. 374.—This justly celebrated poem appeared first in *The Shilling Magazine*, with a fine illustration by Mr. Frederick Sandys. It has also been made the subject of an oil-picture by Mr. Edward Hughes. Mr. Sandys showed a group of two lovers—the man guitar-playing and singing, the woman pleasing herself with a hand-mirror. I do not perceive, however, that such was exactly the authoress's intention. I take it that both her personages are female: one of them a woman, the other the World in feminine shape. The first speaker is the woman, who inquires of the World whither she is going: it is the World who is figured with 'love-locks,' and as 'dear to doat on,' and who is afterwards pronounced 'false and fleetest.' The reader can take or reject this opinion as he likes, for I do not remember ever hearing the point settled by Christina. In her arrangement of her poems when collected, she put *Up-hill* next after *Amor Mundi;* a significant juxtaposition, done no doubt with intention. That she thought well of the latter may easily be conjectured; none the less I find in one of her editions the following note on the poem: 'Gabriel remarked very truly, a reminiscence of *The Demon Lover*.' This remark would refer more directly to stanza 3.

From Sunset to Star Rise, p. 375.—This very impressive sonnet was at first entitled *Friends*. In the note-book containing the MS. of the sonnet I find a pencil note, 'House of Charity,' written against the title. The House of Charity was, I think, an Institution at Highgate for reclaiming 'fallen' women; and it may perhaps be inferred that Christina wrote this sonnet as if it were an utterance of one of these women, not of herself. Yet one hesitates to think so, for the sonnet has a tone which seems deeply personal. 'Christina' (thus wrote Mrs. William Bell Scott in 1860) 'is now an associate, and wore the dress—which is very simple, elegant even; black with hanging sleeves, a muslin cap with lace edging, quite becoming to her with the veil.'

En Route, p. 377.—Under this heading I find three pieces in MS. which seem to have little connection one with the other. Presumably they were all written while my sister, along with my mother and myself, was making a flying visit to North Italy (through France and Switzerland). She was never there at any other time. The passionate delight in Italy to which *En Route* bears witness suggests that she was almost an alien—or, like her father, an exile—in the North. She never perhaps wrote anything better. I can remember the intense relief and pleasure with which she saw lovable Italian faces and heard musical Italian speech at Bellinzona after the somewhat hard and nipped quality of the German Swiss. I now give only one piece under the name *En Route*. The first piece and the third were used by my sister in her

poem named *An Immurata Sister* (see p. 380).

Enrica, 1865, p. 377.—This poem was first published, under the name of *An English Drawing-room*, in a selection entitled *Picture Posies, Poems chiefly by Living Authors*, 1874, with an illustration by Houghton. I remember perfectly well the lady to whom the verses refer—an interesting person, anything but kindly treated by fate. She was Signora Enrica Barile; her husband had taken the fancy of altering his name to Filopanti, so she was called Signora Filopanti. Her husband (whom I never saw) had some pretensions as an Italian patriot, an adherent of Mazzini and Garibaldi—the latter indeed, in his *Memoirs*, has spoken of him very highly. He also dabbled in the doctrine of metempsychosis, and would have it that Dante and Beatrice were reincarnated in himself and his wife. The general love of humankind which impelled him to rename himself as Filopanti was, unfortunately, unpropitious to a normal affection for his spouse; so after a while he gave her notice that she had better look out for some separate means of subsistence. She came to London—a very agreeable bright-natured lady, still perhaps under thirty, personable and comely, and not far from handsome—of course, as the poem shows, eminently Italian in character and manner. It was through Mrs. Bell Scott that our family knew her. Signora Filopanti was the lady who, upon Garibaldi's visit to London in 1864, delivered a brief and extemporized harangue to him in public, as he stood before a vast concourse *en route* from the railway station to the heart of London. The Signora tried to establish a teaching connection in London, with only indifferent success. After a time she left, and I heard little or nothing further about her until 1902; she was then living, and in Italy. Here, as in the preceding piece, *En Route*, we can discern the strong Italian sympathies and affinities of Christina.

Husband and Wife, p. 378.—Th was published in a book called *A Masq of Poets;* I do not recollect the detail It appears to be the same poem whi (as shown in a letter from my brothe 5 January 1866, published in his *Fami Letters*) Mr. F. A. Sandys was thinkin of illustrating, and for which my broth proposed the title *Grave-clothes and Baby clothes*.

An Immurata Sister, p. 380.—Th poem is constructed out of two con positions which my sister wrote in Jun 1865, and which she at first associate with the one which is termed *En Rou* (see p. 485). The quatrain beginnin 'Hearts that die,' and the one beginnin 'Sparks fly upward,' were added at som later date; and the one beginning 'Th world hath sought' is different from it first form. The title, *An Immurat Sister*, may be open to some uncertainty The lines are clearly a personal utter ance; and I suppose that my sister mean to indicate that, by essential conditio of soul, she was not unlike one of thos nuns whose rule keeps them severel immured.

Once for all (*Margaret*), p. 380.—The name Margaret was added when my sister printed this sonnet. The person whom she meant by it was the first Mrs. James Hannay—as I learn from a note pencilled in one of her editions. Presumably the sonnet was written when Mr. Hannay contracted a second marriage.

Song, p. 382.—This song (which in MS. bears a title, *What Comes?*) is the last piece entered in Christina's series of note-books, seventeen in number. As I have said before, precise dates are seldom traceable henceforward.

From Metastasio, p. 382.—These lines form a paraphrastic translation from a lyric ('Amo te solo') in Metastasio's *Clemenza di Tito*. I found them as a scrap of MS., pencilled by Christina thus: 'I must have done this for Traventi, who wanted English words to

set to music.' Traventi was a Neapolitan musical composer and teacher; the date of the translation may be 1868 or rather earlier.

By Way of Remembrance, p. 384.—To this quartett of sonnets I find the date 1870 appended. To one of them, the third, there is (in a different MS.) the precise date '23.10.70.'

An Echo from Willow-wood, p. 385.—The title indicates that this sonnet by Christina is based on those sonnets by our brother, named *Willow-wood*, which were first published in 1869. Christina's sonnet may possibly be intended to refer to the love and marriage of my brother and Miss Siddal, and to her early death in 1862; or it may (which I think far more probable) be intended for a wholly different train of events. The verses were printed in *The Magazine of Art*, with an illustration by Mr. C. Ricketts. This was in 1890; but, from the association of the sonnet with *Willow-wood*, I give conjecturally the date '*circa* 1870.'

The German-French Campaign, p. 386.—The notice prefixed by the authoress to these two poems is no doubt correct in saying that they were not intended to express 'political bias.' It is none the less true that she had incomparably more general and native sympathy with the French nationality than with the German.

'*The King of Sheshach*,' p. 386.—It is not every one who has the Bible so much at his fingers' ends as my sister had. The king of Sheshach, a potentate obscure to several of us, is discoverable in the book of *Jeremiah*, ch. xxv.

To-day for me, p. 387.—Dante Rossetti considered this to be among Christina's noblest productions, and he has probably been not alone in that opinion. This is one more instance of her marked success in carrying one rhyme from end to end of a poem.

Venus's Looking-glass, p. 387.—Mr. Cayley sent to my sister a short MS. poem named *The Birth of Venus*, and soon afterwards, 13 October 1872, another shorter poem on the same argument. Upon the latter poem she wrote the following note: 'The longer of these two poems was sent me first. Then I wrote one which the second rebuts. At last I wound up by my sonnet *Venus's Looking-glass*.' In a copy of her collected *Poems*, 1875, there is also the following note: 'Perhaps "Love-in-Idleness" would be a better title, with an eye to the next one'—*i.e.* to *Love lies Bleeding*.

Love lies Bleeding, p. 388.—As Christina associated this sonnet with the preceding one, *Venus's Looking-glass*, I have kept them together, dating the second '*circa* 1872.' All that I really know of its date, however, is that it got published in 1875.

Days of Vanity, p. 388.—Appeared in *Scribner's Monthly* for November 1872. Thus I am enabled to fix the date as 'before 1873.' Some other cases of the same sort, not always specified in my notes, occur.

Cor Mio, p. 389.—I find this sonnet in my sister's handwriting, endorsed by her 'the original version of my sonnet.' The reference is to No. 18 in the series named *Later Life*. In that version the octave (beginning 'So late in autumn half the world's asleep') is entirely changed, while the sextett remains the same. The present form of this sonnet, being a more directly personal utterance, seems worth preserving.

A Green Cornfield, p. 389.—This and some other compositions are dated by me 'before 1876,' on the ground that they were first printed in the collected volume of 1875.

Valentines to my Mother, p. 391.—I am probably not alone in considering these as very charming compositions of their simple intimate kind. Christina left a pencilled note about them thus: 'These Valentines had their origin from my dearest mother's remarking that she

had never received one. I, her C. G. R., ever after supplied one on the day; and (so far as I recollect) it was a surprise every time, she having forgotten all about it in the interim.' Our mother was born in April 1800, so she was nearly seventy-six when the first Valentine was written; she died in April 1886.

Valentine for 1877, p. 391.—The signature 'C. G. for M. F. R.' means that these verses are spoken as in the person of Maria Francesca (our elder sister) in heaven; she had died in November 1876.

Valentine for 1878, p. 392.—This is marked on the back 'To the Queen of Hearts,' and the like with all the ensuing Valentines.

Valentine for 1883, p. 393.—Here is an evident reminiscence as to the death of Dante Gabriel in April 1882; probably also as to the death of my infant son Michael in January 1883.

Freaks of Fashion, p. 395.—I understand that this was first published in a so-called *Girls' Annual*, 1878. I date it accordingly.

Parted, p. 397.—In 1880 a volume of poems by Mr. C. B. Cayley was privately printed. One of its items was entitled *Moor and Christian*, purporting to be 'taken from a Spanish source,' and expressing the emotion of a Moslem woman severed from her Christian lover. Christina, using the same metre and number of lines; wrote the present composition—of course from a very diverse point of view.

To-day's Burden, p. 397.—Comes from Mr. Hall Caine's compilation, *Sonnets of Three Centuries*, 1882. Date conjectural, but probably not far wrong.

The Key-note, p. 397.—The title is to be understood as meaning that this sonnet was prefixed to the volume *A Pageant and other Poems* (1881), to serve as its key-note.

'*Luscious and Sorrowful*,' p. 398.—These words, 'Luscious and sorrowful,' are borrowed from a little lyric by Cayley named *Noli me tangere*, which was published in *The Nation*, 1866. In that lyric the epithets are applied to the song of the nightingale. See also the Italian poem (p. 450), headed *Luscious and Sorrowful*.

Johnny, p. 399.—Christina got this pretty anecdote from a book in my possession. The copy is imperfect and titleless, but I have reason to think it is named *Recueil d'Actions Héroïques des Républicains Français*, par Léonard Bourdon. It contains coloured prints by Labrousse, and explanatory text. The precise account given of 'Johnny' is as follows: He was named Locquet, aged eight, and was born in Paris; his 'trait de piété filiale' occurred on 15 pluviôse, an 7. His mother being very ill and almost penniless, he ran off to a wig-maker, priced his fine head of hair at twelve francs, received the money, and handed it to his mother, whose illness however proved rapidly mortal. A soldier then adopted young Locquet, in the Decadary Temple of Gratitude. This 'estimable militaire' refused to allow his name to appear in the narrative.

Hollow-sounding and mysterious, p. 400.—Some readers will recognize this title as being a phrase applied to the sea in a poem by Mrs. Hemans.

Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde, 1674, p. 411.—Perhaps it is superfluous to say that this Sœur Louise was the loving and lovely Duchesse de la Vallière, the mistress of Louis XIV. The year 1674 appears to be that in which she retired into a Carmelite Convent; she did not assume the veil, and become Sœur Louise, until 1675.

Birchington Churchyard, p. 412.—The churchyard in which Dante Gabriel Rossetti was buried in the same month when this sonnet was written.

One Seaside Grave, p. 413.—It would seem to most people that these lines also

relate to Birchington; my belief, however, is that they relate to Hastings, where Charles Cayley lies buried.

Who shall say? p. 414.—The date *circa* 1884 is presumed, owing to the rough draft of the poem coming on the back of the sonnet, 'Scarce tolerable life,' etc. See the note (p. 469) to that sonnet.

One Swallow does not make a Summer, p. 414.—Was printed in *Time Flies*, but not reprinted in the *Verses*, 1893. No doubt my sister considered that it was not admissible into that series of exclusively devotional poetry. The like course was pursued with a few other items of *Time Flies*.

A Frog's Fate, p. 414.—Was printed as the preceding item. No title was given to the piece by my sister, so I have supplied one.

The Way of the World, p. 415.—Comes from *The Magazine of Art*, July 1894, and must be the latest printed of any verse compositions within my sister's lifetime. Mr. Britten made an illustration to the stanzas. When they were written is quite uncertain to me—possibly at a date even later than that which I have noted.

Brother Bruin, p. 416.—I think this may probably have been written in consequence of a letter I sent, enclosing for Christina a 'history of a maltreated bear, from yesterday's *Daily News*.'

To my Fior-di-lisa, p. 417.—One of the friends who saw my sister most frequently and affectionately in her closing years was Miss Lisa Wilson. Christina sometimes called her Fior-di-lisa (which is the same as Fleur-de-lys). Miss Wilson, who has a graceful touch of her own both in published verse and in painting, presented to Christina in 1892 a little illuminated book of poems by herself; my sister inserted into it the present lines of response.

To-morrow, p. 417.—This little poem (the title is mine) comes from *The Face of the Deep;* it was not reprinted in the *Verses* of 1893—I hardly see why. It might readily have found a niche in that shrine of sacred song; but, taken singly, it seems more apposite to the section of *General Poems* than to that of *Devotional Poems*.

Sleeping at Last, p. 417.—I regard these verses (the title again is mine) as being the very last that Christina ever wrote; probably late in 1893, or it may be early in 1894. They form a very fitting close to her poetic performance, the longing for rest (even as distinguished from actual bliss in heaven) being most marked throughout the whole course of her writings. I found the lines after her death, and had the gratification of presenting them, along with the childish script of her very first verses *To my Mother*, to the MS. Department of the British Museum.

Poems for Children, and Minor Verse, p. 417.—The term *Poems for Children* explains itself. By *Minor Verse* I designate some few things written by my sister which, while I consider them to be well worthy of preservation, are nevertheless of a slight and casual kind, and hardly fitted for being mixed up among her *General Poems*. In the *Poems for Children* the principal item is the series named *Sing-song* (a title which was proposed by our mother, and immediately adopted, and no doubt liked owing to its origin, by Christina). This series, as it here stands, was compiled by Christina herself, and brought out in 1872 as a separate volume, charmingly illustrated by that fine artist and most estimable and lovable man, Mr. Arthur Hughes. I do not, of course, interfere here with the arrangement adopted by my sister, and therefore the whole of *Sing-song* has to go among the *Poems for Children*. But I cannot help regarding this with some regret, as the series includes various lyrics which, though not unadapted for children, are truly in a high strain of

poetry, and perfectly suited for figuring among her verse for adults, and even for taking an honoured place as such. It may perhaps be as well to specify which are the items that I more especially regard in this light. They are the items which respectively begin (1) 'Dead in the cold, a song-singing thrush'; (2) 'I dug and dug amongst the snow'; (3) 'A baby's cradle with no baby in it'; (4) 'Hope is like a harebell trembling from its birth'; (5) 'Growing in the vale'; (6) 'O wind, where have you been'; (7) 'What are heavy? Sea-sand and sorrow'; (8) 'The summer nights are short'; (9) 'Twist me a crown of wind-flowers'; (10) 'Dancing on the hill-tops'; (11) 'If hope grew on a bush'; (12) 'Under the ivy-bush'; (13) 'Sing me a song'; (14) 'The wind has such a rainy sound'; (15) 'Three little children'; (16) 'Rosy maiden Winifred'; (17) 'Roses blushing red and white'; (18) 'When a mounting skylark sings'; (19) 'Who has seen the wind?' (20) 'O sailor come ashore'; (21) 'The lily has a smooth stalk'; (22) 'Oh fair to see'; (23) 'Is the moon tired? she looks so pale'; (24) 'Good-bye in fear, good-bye in sorrow'; (25) 'Baby lies so fast asleep.' These, however, are not the only compositions which might, without any impropriety (but for the original form of their publication), be transferred to the class of *General Poems*.

Sonnets written to Bouts-rimés, p. 417.—Our brother Dante Gabriel and myself were, towards 1848, greatly addicted to writing sonnets together to *bouts-rimés;* most of my verses published in *The Germ*—and this remark applies not to sonnets alone—were thus composed. Christina did not do much in the like way; but, being in my company at Brighton in the summer of 1848, she consented to try her chance. Like her brothers, she was very rapid at the work. The first sonnet in this present series was done in nine minutes; the ninth in five. After the Brighton days she renewed this exercise hardly at all. A few of he *bouts-rimés* sonnets, after the first scrib bling of them, were retouched to some but only a small, extent.

Sonnet vii, p. 419.—This sonnet abou a chilly August is certainly not a marke success; but it pictured with some trut the day on which it was written, and I allow it to pass muster.

Sonnet viii, p. 420.—Dante Rossetti, writing on 30 August 1848, said, in relation to one of Christina's *bouts-rimés* sonnets (I am not certain which): 'Her other is first-rate. Pray impress upon her that this, and the one beginning 'Me-thinks the ills of life' [*i.e.* No. 8], are as good as anything she has written, and well worthy of revision.'

The Plague, p. 420.—Dante Rossetti's letter above mentioned says of this sonnet: 'I grinned tremendously over Christina's *Plague*, which however is forcible, and has something good in it.'

Sonnets xa, b, and c, pp. 420, 421.—The sonnet marked *c* was, like 1 to 9, written at Brighton. At a later date—1850, or perhaps earlier—Christina wrote the prose story for girls entitled *Maude* (published in 1897). An incident in this story is the competition of three young ladies composing *bouts-rimés* sonnets; *c* is pronounced to be the best of the three. The sonnet *a* (it will at once be observed) is not a true sonnet at all, having lines of unequal length. This was, of course, intentional on Christina's part, to mark the inaptitude of the young lady who is supposed to have indited *a*. None the less I give the three sonnets together, as showing how readily Christina could utilize the same rhymes for three entirely distinct lines of thought or subject. Two of the phrases in *c* are thus commented in *Maude:* 'I have literally seen a man in Regent Street wearing a sort of hooded cloak with one tassel. Of course every one will understand "the Bason" to mean the one in St. James's Park.'

To Lalla, p. 421.—This was a pet name given to Henrietta Polydore, daughter of our Uncle Henry. The name was her own baby invention, I think. She became consumptive, and died in America in 1874, aged about twenty-eight.

Two Enigmas, p. 422.—The answer to the first of these enigmas is 'Jack.' It was published in a little pocket-book named *Marshall's Ladies' Daily Remembrancer* for 1850, and must apparently (according to the conditions laid down) have been sent in before June 1849. One copy of the *Remembrancer* was awarded as a prize to the authoress; some other more admired contributors received two copies. The second enigma means 'Punch,' which was another of the subjects for the *Remembrancer* of 1850. This second enigma has reached me only in a manuscript copy made by one of our aunts.

Two Charades, p. 422.—The first means 'Candid,' the second 'Proserpine.' The latter was published in the *Remembrancer* aforenamed. There was another unpublished charade, *Ægisthus;* but I have not thought it deserving of type.

Portraits, p. 423.—This warm-hearted though light effusion is meant for myself in the first stanza, and for Dante Gabriel and myself in the last. There used to be an intermediate stanza, characterizing *him;* it is torn out (by his rather arbitrary hand, beyond a doubt), and I do not remember its terms. Many readers now will agree with me in thinking this a great pity. A laudatory phrase or two regarding myself ought possibly to have induced me to exclude the verses, but I cannot make up my mind to do that.

Charon, p. 423.—These sportive lines take their cue, of course, from the old song, 'In my cottage near the wood.' They tickled our sister Maria uncommonly. I had totally forgotten them; Christina on her deathbed (9 October 1894) happened to recite them to me—for she was often extremely conversible up to and beyond that date, spite of her pain and languor—and I wrote them down from her lips. When first published (1896), the verses were entitled by me *Near the Styx;* but I now gather that Christina's own name for them was *Charon*.

The P. R. B. (1), p. 424.—These lines were sent to me in a letter from Christina (then settled with our parents at Frome, Somerset), saying: 'This morning I commenced a remarkable doggerel on the P. R. B.,' etc. And then, after copying out the lines, 'You may guess that at this point of my letter I came to a stand, from the extra finish bestowed on the three last asterisks.' For a few remarks on the substance of the lines, see the following note.

The P. R. B. (2), p. 424.—Was first published in my *Memoir* of Dante G. Rossetti, 1895. The sonnet was written soon after the election of Millais as A.R.A. The allusions to Woolner, then in Australia; Holman-Hunt, who was projecting to visit Egypt and Palestine; Dante Rossetti, who had ceased to exhibit his paintings; and Stephens, who had scarcely come forward as an exhibiting artist at all, can be readily understood. The allusion to myself is less perspicuous. It means that I, as art-critic of *The Spectator*, abused in that paper my fellows in the Præraphaelite Brotherhood, and that no one heeded my reviews. This joke was not historically true; I upheld, with such vigour as was in me, the cause of the Præraphaelites, and my articles, being at first solitary in that tone of criticism, passed not wholly unobserved.

Winter, p. 425.—Mr. Swynfen Jervis, a friendly acquaintance of our father, wrote a quatrain and a half entitled *Sir Winter;* and he appears to have got Christina to complete the little poem. Christina finished quatrain two, and wrote five others. The third of these five reverts to the idea of '*Sir* Winter'; so I omit it, as being extraneous to the

character of her own composition: it has no poetical value.

Love's Name, p. 425.—This small ditty is introduced into the prose tale named *Commonplace*, finished in 1870, and published in the same year. It is supposed to be sung by certain young ladies in Greek costume, enacting a charade upon the word 'Love-apple.'

Golden Holly, p. 426.—This trifle, owing to its associations of old and uninterrupted friendship, I was unwilling in 1896 to omit: and I know now that I ought not to have omitted it, for Mr. Swinburne pronounced it an excellent thing. It was addressed to Holman [Holly] Frederic Stephens, then a little boy, son of our constant friend, Frederic George Stephens (one of the seven members of the 'P. R. B.'). Tennyson once saw the child in the Isle of Wight, and pronounced him (not unreasonably) to be 'the most beautiful boy I have ever seen.' Mr. Stephens senior, in sending me the verses at my request, wrote that they refer 'to H. F. S.'s frequent pet name of "The Golden Holly," given because of the brightness of his long hair, as well as his birthday being on October 31. He had sent a tea-rose to C. G. R.'

Sing-song, p. 426.—The items of this series continue down to the one which begins *Lie a-bed* (p. 443). In the MS. of *Sing-song* Christina made a series of pen-and-ink sketches—slight and primitive of course, but not without suggestiveness. The MS., after lying *perdu* for a long time, has returned to my possession.

Rhymes Dedicated to the Baby who suggested them, p. 426.—The baby son of Professor Arthur Cayley of Cambridge, the celebrated mathematician. The lines, 'I know a baby, such a baby,' were, I think, intended for this dedicatee.

Kookoorookoo—Kikirikee, p. 426.—I may perhaps be pardoned for saying that these poultry-noises form a reminiscence from Christina's own childhood. Our father was in the habit of making the noises to amuse his bantlings.

Willie Wee, p. 441.—This was my mother's pet name for me in childhood; a second reminiscence.

An Alphabet, p. 443.—This was printed in 1875, with some woodcuts, in some magazine; the headline of the pages is *For Very Little Folks*, which may or may not be the title of the magazine itself. It must be an American publication, as the verses are headed *An Alphabet from England*.

Hadrian's Death-Song Translated, p. 444.—In 1876 Mr. David Johnston, of Bath, formed the project of collecting various translations of the famous lines—'Animula vagula blandula,' etc., and issuing them in a volume, which was privately printed. He looked up old translations, and invited new ones. Christina became one of his contributors, also our sister Maria and myself; Christina making an Italian as well as an English translation (see p. 453).

My Mouse, p. 444.—This was not a 'mouse' in the ordinary sense, but a '*sea*-mouse.' Mr. Cayley had picked it up on the seashore, and presented it to my sister, preserved in spirits. The sea-mouse was with her to the end, and may remain with me to the end; its brilliant iridescent hues are still vivid. The scientific name of this creature is *Aphrodita aculeata*; hence the allusion to 'Venus.'

A Poor Old Dog, p. 444.—My sister was a very staunch supporter of the Anti-Vivisection Movement. In a letter to our brother (dated perhaps in 1879) she sent the present verses, with the following remarks: 'There has just been held a fancy sale at a house in Prince's Gate for the Anti-Vivisection cause, and, having nothing else to contribute, I sent a dozen autographs as follows [then come the verses]. Of these, nine on the first day fetched 2s. 6d. or 3s., while one even brought in 10s.! The remaining

three, I hope, were disposed of on the closing day.'

To William Bell Scott, p. 444.—These verses were sent to Mr. Scott in acknowledgment of a copy of his volume, *A Poet's Harvest-Home*, issued in April 1882. The reference to 'a heavy old heart' has no doubt to do with the death of Dante Rossetti, 9 April 1882. The verses were first published in Mr. Scott's *Autobiographical Notes*.

Counterblast on Penny Trumpet, p. 444.—These rather neat lines are entirely out of my sister's ordinary groove, which fact (trifling as they are) makes me the more unwilling to leave them out. They stand signed 'C. G. R. : see *St. James's Gazette*, 21 July 1882 : motive, a Poem.' I infer (for I have not been at the pains of looking up the *St. James's Gazette*) that that newspaper contained some effusion censuring Mr. Bright for having quitted the Ministry after the bombardment of Alexandria, and also censuring Mr. Gladstone for continuing in the Ministry. My sister knew and cared next to nothing about party politics (apart from questions having a religious bearing); in all her later years, however, her feeling leaned more towards the Conservative than the Liberal cause.

Mole and Earthworm, p. 445.—Here the title is mine. The lines were published in *Time Flies*, but not reproduced in the *Verses* of 1893, where they would have been quite inappropriate.

To Mary Rossetti, p. 445.—These slight lines were addressed to my daughter Mary, probably when aged from five to six.

What will it be? p. 445.—This snatch of verse, and the five following, come from *The Face of the Deep;* they were omitted from the *Verses* of 1893, presumably as being too slight to figure apart from their context. In each instance, except the third, the title is added by me.

Versi, p. 446.—In 1851-52 some young ladies (mostly living in the Regent's Park neighbourhood) had a fancy for getting up a little privately-printed magazine, which was termed *The Bouquet from Marylebone Gardens*. My sister was invited to contribute, and she consented to do so, writing always in Italian. Each contributor adopted some floral name as a signature; Christina was 'Calta.' These *Versi*, and also the following two compositions, come from this rather obscure source. Christina's principal contribution was in prose, not verse—a *Corrispondenza Famigliare* between two supposed young ladies, Italian and English, the former being at school. There are eight of these letters, rather neat performances in their way; and, no doubt, others would have followed but for the early decease of the magazine, the withering of the *Bouquet*.

Nigella, p. 447.—In the *Corrispondenza* above named these verses are introduced as being written by the Italian damsel to accommodate her English friend, who had been asked to produce some Italian lines for a lady's album.

Chiesa e Signore, p. 447.—These lines appear in a scrap of MS. which is thus inscribed: 'Written out at Folkestone 6 August 1871, but date of composition not recollected by C. G. R.' I infer that the date of composition was then rather remote, pehaps towards 1860.

Il Rosseggiar dell' Oriente, p. 447.—For any quasi-explanation as to these singularly pathetic verses—'Love's very vesture and elect disguise,' the inborn idiom of a pure and impassioned heart—I refer the reader to the Memoir. The verses were kept by Christina in the jealous seclusion of her writing-desk, and I suppose no human eye had looked upon them until I found them there after her death.

Si rimanda la Tocca-caldaja, p. 448.—The phrase here, 'Se pur fumar nol puoi,' sounds odd. The lines were

written in reply to other lines by Cayley named *Si scusa la Tocca-caldaja*. His final line contains the phrase, 'S'ei mi fumma,' and hence Christina's words in reply.

Blumine risponde, p. 448.—In 'Blumine' the reader will recognize a name used by Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus*.

Lassuso il caro Fiore, p. 449.—The main topic in this little poem must have some relation to what is touched upon in No. 3 of the series.

Per Preferenza, p. 451.—To the first of these stanzas Christina has written the word 'Supposto'; to the second, 'Accertato'; to the third, 'Dedotto.' There must have been in her head some whimsical notion of logical sequence, or what not. I can understand it to some extent, without discussing it.

L' Uommibatto, p. 453.—Christina took it upon her to Italianize in this form the name of the *Wombat*, which was a cherished pet animal of our brother. It will be understood that she is exhorting the Wombat not to follow (which he was much inclined to do) his inborn propensity for burrowing, and not to turn up in the Antipodes, his native Australia. As a motto to these verses Christina wrote an English distich :—

> When wombats do inspire,
> I strike my disused lyre.

Adriano, p. 453.—See the note to p. 444.

Ninna-nanna, p. 453.—The following snatches of Italian verse are translations or paraphrases made by Christina from her own volume *Sing-song*. Our cousin Teodorico Pietrocola-Rossetti first made some translations from that book, whose title he rendered as *Ninna-nanna;* herein I follow his lead. His translations were felicitous. Inspirited by his example, Christina made other—and, I conceive, in poetic essentials still better—translations. Readers familiar with *Sing-song* will perceive that numerous compositions in that volume remain untranslated.

Sognando, p. 458.—I give this title to two stanzas which I find written by Christina into a copy of our father's book of sacred poems—*Il Tempo, ovvero Dio e l' Uomo, Salterio*, 1843. The copy is one which he gave in the same year to his sister-in-law, Charlotte Polidori; as the latter lived on till January 1890, this copy would only at that date, most likely, have become Christina's property. This consideration and also the look of the handwriting induce me to suppose that the verses were written not earlier than 1890; they would thus be the last Italian verses which my sister produced. She has signed them thus: 'C. G. R., fired by papa's calling this metre difficult'—the metre being the one adopted throughout the whole book *Il Tempo* in its original form. This MS. note might suggest a far earlier date for the lines; but, on the whole, I abide by my own view as just expressed.

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